





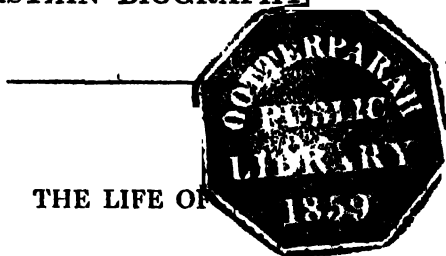








CHRISTIAN BIOGRAPHY,



THE LIFE OF

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON;

WITH A FEW EXTRACTS FROM HIS  
WRITINGS.

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*Religious Tract Society,*

*Instituted 1799;*

PUBLISHED AND SOLD AT THE DEPOSITORY, 56, PATER-  
NOSTER-ROW; BY J. NISBET, 21, BERNERS STREET;  
AND OTHER BOOKSELLERS



THE, LIFE  
OF  
ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

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NOTHING particular is recorded relative to the remote ancestors of Archbishop Leighton. His father, Dr. Alexander Leighton, a Scots' clergyman, was settled in London in the reign of King Charles I. He suffered very severely from the arbitrary measures of those times, being treated with much cruelty in the year 1630, by the sentence of the *High Commission* Court, and the *Star Chamber* ; two oppressive tribunals which then existed. But we need not dwell upon the painful subject. Let British Christians feel thankful for their present privileges, and let them improve the advantages they enjoy, by endeavouring to promote their own spiritual advancement, and the extension of the cause of Christ at home and abroad.

Dr. Alexander Leighton had four children who attained maturity, two sons and two daughters, Robert was the eldest. His place of birth appears to have been Edinburgh, and the time, the year 1611.

Robert Leighton, after being instructed in the common parts of education, and initiated into the higher branches, was sent to the University of Edinburgh. From the authority of his sister, we learn, that his early youth was distinguished by great teachableness

and attention, and that his parents were greatly pleased with his extraordinary indifference to the common follies of childhood and youth.

Highly as Robert Leighton was favoured in his religious education, and distinguished as he was above other youths, he no doubt deeply felt the depravity of human nature. He frequently adverts, in his writings, to man's natural state; the following extract will shew his sentiments on this subject: "The soul of man unconverted is no other but a den of impure lusts, wherein dwell pride, uncleanness, avarice, malice, &c. just as Babylon is described in Rev. xviii. 2; or as Isa. xiii. 21. Were a man's eyes opened he would as much abhor to remain with himself in that condition, 'as to dwell in a house full of snakes and serpents,' as St. Augustine says. And the first part of conversion is at once to rid the soul of these noisome inhabitants, for there is none at all found naturally vacant and free from them."—"The estate of lost mankind is indeed nothing but darkness, being destitute of all spiritual truth and comfort, and tending to utter and everlasting darkness."

We have no particulars of the way in which the mind of Leighton was brought from nature's darkness into the light of the gospel; this probably is owing to his retired habits, and the public confusions of those times.

At an early age, however, he gave strong indications of that eminent piety, for which he was afterwards distinguished. He also shewed that he possessed considerable talents for the acquisition of knowledge. His views and studies were directed towards the Christian ministry from an early period of his life. By his quick progress in learning, he excited the admiration of his fellow-students, while he gained their esteem by the gentleness of his temper and the prudence of his conduct. His good behaviour, and talents also, attracted

the attention of his superiors; and one of them, in a letter to Dr. Leighton, congratulated him on having a son in whom Providence had made him abundant compensation for his sufferings.

Young Leighton finished his academical course with great applause. After taking his degree, he went abroad, and lived several years in France, particularly at Douay, where some of his relations resided. Here he appears to have met with some persons whose lives were founded on the strictest rules of self-denial, and his future character appears to have been somewhat influenced by their example.

On his return to Scotland, having been unanimously called by the congregation of Newbottle, near Edinburgh, and having passed through the usual course of trial for the ministry, in that country, he was ordained there about the 30th year of his age, on the 16th of December, 1641.

Leighton remained at Newbottle several years; and proved himself to be a workman who needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. He was most assiduous in discharging the various duties of his office. His preparation for the pulpit was very exact. He diligently visited the poor, the sick, and the afflicted of his flock; and promoted personal, domestic, social, and public religion, to the utmost of his power, by precept, example, and many prayers. This faithful minister of Christ lived in a plain and retired manner; he had an utter aversion to mixed company; was extremely cautious in the choice of his friends; and was never happier than when engaged in the duties of his office, or in his closet, storing his comprehensive mind with sacred knowledge, communing with his own heart, and praying to his God.

His mind was not fitted for bustle and strife. Partly from timidity and modesty, partly from his inclination for peace, he seldom attended meetings of the presbytery, or of ministers and elders from neighbouring

congregations. He was, however, occasionally present; and it being the custom for the presbytery to inquire of the several brethren twice a year, "Whether they preached to the times?" Leighton, when thus interrogated, acknowledged his omission, and apologized for it, saying, "If all the brethren have preached to the *times*, may not one poor brother be suffered to preach on *eternity*?"

The superiority of Leighton's mind to temporal things, was also clearly manifested by his indifference to worldly riches. At his father's death, he came into possession of about a thousand pounds, which sum was, in fact, his whole property. This he placed in the hands of a merchant without adequate security. His brother-in-law, Mr. Lightmaker, urged him to come to London to vest it more safely. Leighton's reply is characteristic, the following is an extract:—"Any pittance belonging to me may possibly be useful and needful for my subsistence; but truly, if something else draw me not, I shall never bestow so long a journey on what I account so mean a business. Above all things, I wish for myself and you all, our daily increase in likeness to Jesus Christ, and growing heavenwards, where He is who is our treasure." In a short time the merchant failed, and Leighton's patrimony was lost. The following letter to his brother-in-law will show the spirit with which he bore this trial:

"Your kind advice I cannot but thank you for, but I am not easily taught that lesson. I confess, it is the wiser way to trust nobody; but there is so much of the fool in my nature, as carries me rather to the other extreme, to trust every body. Yet I will venture to take the best means I can in that little business you write of. It is true, there is a lawful yea, a needful diligence in such things: but, alas! how poor are they to the portion of believers where our treasure is.

"The little that was in Mr. E.'s hands hath failed me; but I shall either have no need of it, or be supplied

some other way. And this is the relief of my rolling thoughts, that while I am writing this, this moment is passing away, and all the hazards of want and sickness shall be at an end. My mother writes to me, and presses my coming up. "I know not yet if that can be; but I intend, God willing, so soon as I can conveniently, if I come not, to take some course that things be done as if I were there. I hope you will have patience in the mean time. Remember my love to my sisters. The Lord be with you, and lead you in his ways."

*Newbottle, Feb. 4, 1650.*

When Leighton visited England, and his recent loss was adverted to by Mr. Lightmaker, who regretted that he had misplaced his confidence, "Oh, no more of that," cried Leighton, "the good man has escaped from the care and vexation of that business." "What, is that all you make of the matter?" rejoined his brother-in-law, with surprise: "Truly," answered Leighton, "if the Duke of Newcastle, after losing nineteen times as much of yearly income, can dance and sing, and the solid hopes of Christianity will not avail to support us, we had better be as the world."

Leighton, in his writings, often speaks of the world in a way consistent with his superiority to its cares and pleasures, hence he observes, "Our Saviour tells us expressly, that man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesseth. (Luke xii. 15.) Think you great and rich persons live more content? believe it not. If they will deal freely they can tell you the contrary, that there is nothing but a shew in them, and that great estates and places have great grief and cares attending them, as shadows are proportioned to their bodies.

"And if they have no real crosses, luxury frames troubles to itself, variety of dishes corrupting the stomach, and causing variety of diseases; and for need, fantastic vain discontents that will trouble men



as much as greater, be it but this hawk flies not well, or that dog runs not well, to men whose hearts are in those games.

"So then I say, this is first to be regulated; all childish, vain, needless cares are to be discharged, and, as being unfit to cast on thy God, are to be quite cast out of thy heart. Entertain no care at all but such as thou mayest put into God's hands and make his on thy behalf—such as he will take off thy hand, and undertake for thee.

"All needful lawful care, and that only, will he receive; so then rid thyself quite, of all that thou canst not take this course with, and then without scruple, take confidently this course with all the rest. Seek a well-regulated sober spirit. In the things of this life be content with food and raiment; not delicacies, but food; not ornament, but raiment; and conclude, that what thy Father carves to thee is best for thee, the fittest measure, for he knows it, and loves thee wisely. This course our Saviour would have thee take: (Matt. vi. 31.) first to cut off superfluous care, then to turn over on thy God the care of what is necessary; He will look to what thou hast engaged him for, and he can and will give thee beyond that if he see it fit."

These views of superiority to worldly cares and anxieties were not mere theory. The following incident shewed his admirable self-possession in the prospect of death. He had taken the water at the Savoy Stairs, in company with his brother, Sir Ellis Leighton, his lady, and some others, and was on his way to Lambeth, when, owing to some mismanagement, the boat was in great danger of sinking. While the rest of the party were pale with terror, and most of them crying out, Leighton never for a moment lost his accustomed serenity. To some who afterwards expressed their astonishment at his calmness, he replied, "Why, what harm would it have been if we had all been safe landed

ON THE OTHER SIDE?" In the habit of dying daily, and of daily conversing with the world of spirits, he could never be surprised or disconcerted by a summons to depart out of the body.

Another anecdote will shew his pious calmness in the time of danger. During the civil wars, when the royal army was lying in Scotland, Leighton was anxious to visit his brother, who bore arms in the King's service, before an engagement which was daily expected to take place. On his way to the camp he was benighted in the midst of a vast thicket, and having deviated from the path he sought in vain for an outlet. Almost spent with fatigue and hunger, he began to think his situation desperate, and dismounting, he spread his cloak upon the ground, and knelt down to pray. He calmly resigned his soul to God, entreating, however, that if it were not the divine pleasure for him then to conclude his days, some way of deliverance might be opened. Then remounting his horse, he threw the reins upon its neck, and the animal left to itself, or rather to the care of Providence, threaded all the mazes of the wood, and made straight into the high road.

In the year 1652, after eleven years of close attention to his studies as a minister, he tendered his resignation to the presbytery. At first it was declined, but the year following they were induced to accept it, and on February 3, 1653, his ministerial connection with Newbottle was dissolved. Shortly after he was chosen Principal of the University of Edinburgh. In this situation Leighton was eminently useful. He revived the practice of delivering, once in the week, a Latin lecture on some theological subject—these lectures attracted great attention, and the public-hall was thronged with auditors, who were delighted with the purity of his style, and with his animated delivery, as well as with the matter of his discourses.\* To the

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\* These Lectures have been translated into English.

students under his care he was indefatigably attentive, instructing them singly as well as collectively, and to many youths of capacity and distinction his wise and affectionate exhortations were permanently beneficial. In this office he remained for nearly ten years, the ornament and delight of the University, and a blessing to studious youth.

The course of our narrative has now brought us to the period when Leighton was called to the episcopal office. Charles II. had determined to introduce episcopacy into Scotland, though this measure was opposed to the views and feelings of the great body of the people.

Dr. Leighton, whose views of episcopacy itself were extremely moderate, and who had no idea that the establishment of it in Scotland would produce such effects as followed, had gone to Bath for his health. He courted no preferment, and seems to have indulged no wish for any dignity in the church. Being invited to London, or going thither to visit his brother and friends, the acceptance of a see in Scotland was urged upon him both by the court and his own connexions. His character for learning, piety, moderation, and candour, it was thought, would greatly promote the new scheme. It is probable, likewise, that the hope of accommodating differences between the opposite parties, or, at least, of softening their mutual animosity, induced the Doctor to be overcome by repeated solicitations. One circumstance, scarcely noticed by some of his Biographers, appears to have had no small weight in determining his mind. His brother, Sir Elisha, who was a courtier, and ambitious of preferment, gained his confidence by strong professions of piety, and expected to oblige the king by procuring the Doctor's acquiescence, and to rise at court through his advancement.

The following letter which Leighton addressed to the Rev. James Aird, of Torry, will shew the conflict which he endured at this period :—

“MY DEAR FRIEND,

“I have received from you the kindest letter that ever you wrote me, and that you may know I take it so, I return you the free and friendly advice never to judge any man before you hear him, nor any business by one side of it. Were you here to see the other, I am confident your thoughts and mine would be the same. You have both too much knowledge of me and too much charity, to think that either such little contemptible scraps of honour or riches sought in that part of the world with so much reproach, or any human complacency in the world, will be admitted to decide so grave a question, or that I should sell (to speak no higher) the very sensual pleasure of my retirement for a rattle, far less deliberately do any thing that I judge offends God. For the offence of good people in cases indifferent in themselves, but not accounted so by them, whatsoever you do or do not, you shall offend some good people on the one side or other; and for those with you, the great fallacy in this business is, that they have misreckoned themselves in taking my silence and their zeal to have been consent and participation; which, how great a mistake it is, few know better or so well as yourself. And the truth is, I did see approaching an inevitable necessity to strain with them in divers practices, in what station soever remaining in Britain; and to have escaped further off (which hath been in my thoughts) would have been the greatest scandal of all. And what will you say, if there be in this thing somewhat of that you mention, and would allow of reconciling the devout on different sides, and of enlarging those good souls you meet with from their little fears, though possibly with little success? Yet the design is commendable, pardonable at least. However, one comfort I have, that in what is pressed on me there is the least of my own choice, yea, on the contrary,

the strongest aversion that ever I had to any thing in my life: the difficulty, in short, lies in a necessity of either owning a scruple which I have not, or the rudest disobedience to authority that may be. The truth is, I am yet importuning and struggling for a liberation, and look upward for it; but, whatsoever be the issue, I look beyond it and this weary, weary wretched life, through which the Hand I have resigned it to, I trust, will lead me in the path of his own choosing; and, so that I may please Him, I am satisfied. I hope, if ever we meet, you will find me in the love of solitude and a devout life.

“ Your unaltered brother and friend,  
R. L.”

“ When I set pen to paper, I intended not to exceed half a dozen lines, but slid on insensibly thus far; but though I should fill the paper on all sides, still the right view of this business would be necessarily suspended till our meeting. Meanwhile, hope well of me, and pray for me. This word I will add, that as there has been nothing of my choice in the thing, so I undergo it, if it must be, as a mortification, and that greater than a cell and hair-cloth; and whether any will believe this, I am not careful.”

Leighton was very averse to his own promotion; his nephew's account states, that he was only overcome by a peremptory order of the Court, requiring him to accept it, unless he thought in his conscience that the episcopal office was unlawful. Unable to skreen himself behind this opinion, which he was far from entertaining, he surrendered at length to the Royal will, that he might not incur the guilt of contumacy towards the King, or of shrinking from a service to which a greater Potentate seemed to summon him.

Leighton felt extremely anxious to reconcile the jarring parties in his own country: to obtain so desir-

able an object he consented to expose himself to great personal sacrifices. He soon found that he was placed in unpleasant circumstances, for on any point which seemed to touch the substance of Christian piety he was exquisitely sensible. Hence his disgust at the feasting and jollity with which the consecration of the new bishops was celebrated. It grieved this good man to see any thing of sensual levity mixed up with the solemn business to which they were set apart; and the absence of that seriousness and spirit of prayer which became the commencement of such an undertaking as the new modelling of a church, oppressed his mind with gloomy presages. These were increased when he found Archbishop Sharp unprepared with any plan for healing the wounds of the church, for purging out its corruptions, for rectifying its disorders, and for kindling in it a livelier flame of true piety. On these great objects, Leighton was anxious to begin without delay—he already had conceived a process for the union of parties in Scotland, and for reforming the public services of religion, and reducing them to a method more orderly and better adapted for general edification. But in these Christian projects he found no auxiliary. With Sharp, the establishment of a hierarchy, with himself at the head, appears to have been the grand object: and he was neither able to understand the spirit, nor disposed to forward the schemes, of Leighton, to whose pious disinterestedness the worldliness of his colleagues stood in disgraceful contrast. Leighton's sad forebodings were not a little confirmed by a close observation of Sharp's real character, and by the clearer development that was daily taking place of the principles which actuated him. He remarked to Burnet, "In the whole progress of that affair there appeared such cross characters of an angry Providence, that how fully soever he was satisfied in his own mind as to episcopacy itself, yet it seemed

that God was against them, and that they were not like to be the men that should build up his church; so that the struggling about it seemed to him like fighting against God."

On the 12th of December, 1661, four of the persons selected as bishops for Scotland received consecration in London. Leighton, at his special request, was appointed to the inconsiderable see of Dunblane, in Perthshire. Early in the following year the new bishops proceeded in one coach to Edinburgh. Between Leighton and his colleagues, however, there was such a want of sympathy as made it very irksome to him to journey in their company; and having learnt that it was their intention to make a grand entry into Edinburgh, he quitted them at Morpeth, and arrived some days before the rest of the party. Burnet describes him to have been a downcast spectator of the pomp and parade with which the other three bishops were escorted into the Scottish Metropolis: and the spirit of wise and pious men was abashed when they contrasted this ostentatious pageantry with the example of the true Bishop of souls.

There was no congeniality in the views of Leighton and the plans adopted by his colleagues; he therefore shunned the honors which were offered him, and wished never to interfere in public matters, except where the honor of religion was concerned. His efforts to promote union were thwarted by party-spirit, he therefore sought the privacy in which he delighted, and resided constantly on his see, the diocese of Dunblane, which he had chosen as the least lucrative.

It was in April, 1662, that Bishop Leighton entered the seat of his diocese, and there he laboured most assiduously; preached every Lord's day, consoled the sick and afflicted, instructed the ignorant, and gave liberally to the poor. When any of the churches were vacant, he frequently supplied them himself; and

visited all of them once a-year. The majority of his clergy were both illiterate and careless ; but, his timidity, and hope of their amendment by his own instruction and example, prevented him from deposing them ; a sentence which he would also have found it difficult to execute, against the influence of their friends, and the temper of the other bishops. His deep concern that they might be wise and good is evident from various charges which he gave them ; and particularly from the first, delivered September, 1662, which has been published, and breathes a spirit of piety and peace. Among other excellent directions in that charge, he strongly urged the necessity of personal holiness and of peaceable tempers. He said, “ that it was to be remembered both by them and himself, to what eminent degrees of purity of heart and life, their holy calling doth engage them ; to how great contempt of this present world, and inflamed affections toward heaven, springing from deep persuasion within them of those things they preach to others, and from the daily meditation on them, and fervent prayer : and that we consider how ill it becomes us to be much in the trivial conversation of the world ; but, when our duty or necessity leads us into company, that our speech and deportment be exemplarily holy ; that we be meek and gentle, endeavouring rather to quench than to increase the useless debates and contentions that abound in the world : and be always more studious of pacific than polemic divinity ;—the students of the former are called the sons of God.”

At this time, persecution raged in the southern and western parts of Scotland ; but, not one individual within the diocese of Dunblane, during Leighton's occupation of that see, was violently molested for his religious principles ; an exception which must be ascribed, in a great degree, to the mild temper and active influence of the Bishop. To the Presbyterian



ministers, particularly in his own diocese, he was always lenient. He held several conferences with them for the purpose of accommodation, and occasionally heard them preach.

It would be difficult to do justice to the sense Leighton entertained of the great responsibility of Christian ministers. For himself, (as his practice bears witness) he always desired the smallest cure; partly from his humility, and partly from an apprehension, so lively as to be almost terrible, of the account which must be given in by spiritual overseers at the great tribunal. Often would he commiserate those of the London clergy, the extent of whose cures made it impracticable to pay to each individual of their flock the attention that his soul required. "Were I again," he said in his last retirement, "to be a parish minister, I must follow sinners to their houses, and even to their ale-houses." As one of the faults imputed to the episcopal clergy was unskilfulness in preaching, he was solicitous to remove from his own diocese all colour for this allegation. This he knew could never be effected until the pulpits were filled by holy men. "It is vain," he would say, "for any one to speak of divine things without something of divine affections. An ungodly clergyman must feel weary when preaching godliness, and will hardly preach it persuasively. He has not been able to prevail on himself to be holy, and no marvel if he fail of prevailing upon others. In truth, he is in great danger of becoming hardened against religion by the frequent inculcation of it, if it fail of melting him."

The following extract from a letter, in which he offers a living to one of his clergy, affords a beautiful specimen of Christian politeness, at the same time that it lets us into the bishop's sense of the temper and affection with which a charge of souls should be undertaken.

"SIR,

"There is one place indeed in my precinct now vacant, and yet undisposed of, by the voluntary removal of the young man who was in it to a better benefice; and this is likewise in my hand, but it is of so wretchedly mean provision that I am ashamed to name it—little, I think, above five hundred marks (less than 30*l.* sterling) by year. If the many instances of that kind you have read, have made you in love with *voluntary poverty*, there you may have it; but wheresoever you are or shall be for the little rest of your time, I hope you are, and still will be, daily advancing in the blest poverty of spirit, that is the only true height and greatness of spirit in all the world entitling to a crown; 'for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' Oh! what are all the scraps that the great ones of this world are scrambling for compared with that pretension? I pray you, as you find an opportunity, though possibly little or no inclination to it, yet bestow one line or two upon

"Your poor Friend and Servant,

"R. L."

The following letter to the heritors\* of the parish of Stratton, places in a clear light the upright, yet sagacious policy, by which Leighton managed to fill the vacant benefices with pious men, and to conciliate the good-will of the parishioners to their new pastors.

"WORTHY GENTLEMEN AND FRIENDS,

"Being informed that it is my duty to present a person fit for the charge of the ministry now vacant with you, I have thought of one whose integrity and piety I am so fully persuaded of, that I dare confidently

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\* The heritors of a parish are the *owners* of the real property (lands, houses, &c.) within it.

recommend him to you as one who, if the hand of God do bind that work upon him amongst you, is likely, through the blessing of the same hand, to be very serviceable to the building up of your souls heavenwards; but is as far from suffering himself to be obtruded, as I am from obtruding any upon you: so that unless you invite him to preach, and, after hearing him, declare your consent and desire towards his embracing of the call, you may be secure from the trouble of hearing any further concerning him, either from himself or me; and if you please to let me know your mind, your reasonable satisfaction shall be to my utmost power endeavoured by

“ Your affectionate Friend,

“ And humble Servant,

“ R. L.”

In the charges which this venerable prelate delivered to his clergy, they were directed to read portions of the Old and New Testament, as an important part of the service. It was also his wish that the Lord's Prayer, the Apostle's Creed, and the Doxology, should be restored to more frequent use; that a weekly day should be appointed for catechising, and that an easy compendium of Christian doctrine should be agreed upon by his clergy, to be made the basis of catechetical instructions to the young and the ignorant. Probably the short catechism, which is among his printed works, was composed for this purpose. The sermons of that period generally ran in a high strain of controversy. Against this the bishop set his face, and he laboured to bring into the place of subtle and passionate disputations a modest and sober style of preaching, that should be level to the capacities, and calculated to amend the morals, of the common people. On the ignorance and viciousness of the people in general he touches sorrowfully, and he warns his clergy against

slackness and timidity in reproving the prevalent sins of their respective parishes. Large portions of Holy Scripture were preferred by him as subjects for sermons to single texts, for he thought they offered more scope for pithy practical remark, and were better calculated to lay hold on the attention of the auditory.

Though friendly to a grave and masculine eloquence, of which he was himself no common master, yet his chief desire was that discourses from the pulpit should be simple and clear. After hearing a plain homely sermon he expressed the highest satisfaction; "for the good man," said he, in reference to the preacher, "seems in earnest to catch souls." "The measure of speech," he remarked, (and it is an observation well worthy of being preserved,) "ought to be the character of the audience, which is made for the most part of illiterate persons."

It was among his pious plans to bring about a more frequent celebration of the Lord's Supper, which in those days was not in every place so much as an annual ceremony: he wished the people to be carefully instructed in the spiritual import of this holy rite, and to be frequently exhorted to maintain a constant fitness for it. He also made it incumbent on his clergy to promote the practice of family worship, and to exercise a watchful superintendence over their flocks, bearing the spiritual burdens of every member, and dealing out to each, as his case might require, instruction, or counsel, or reproof, or consolation.

It has been already stated how careful he was to remind his clergy that no substantial good could be expected from their ministrations unless they were themselves remarkable for sanctity of heart and life; men of prayer, of study, and meditation; of "great contempt of this present world, and inflamed affections towards heaven;" whose pure and peaceable demeanour, full of mercy and good fruits, should stamp

*them for the sons of God, and servants of the meek and lowly Jesus.*

This holy man was as remote as possible from an imperious and domineering exercise of his authority. Instead of exacting submission from his clergy by peremptoriness and menaces, he industriously waved his authority as a bishop, and bespoke their obedience by urbanity and gentleness. The only superiority he sought was in labour; the only ascendancy he coveted was in self-denial and holiness; and in these respects he had few competitors for pre-eminence.

The violent efforts which were employed to promote the plans of King Charles II. in Scotland led to much discontent and numerous evils. Leighton's spirit was deeply grieved in witnessing the commotions of his country. He would say, "I have met with many cunning plotters, but with few honest and skilful undertakers. Many have I seen who were wise and great as to this world, but of such as were willing to be weak that others may be strong, and whose only aim it is to promote the prosperity of Zion, I have not found one in ten thousand."

Having made these afflicting discoveries, and finding all his efforts to put things in a better train quite ineffectual, Leighton thought that he should be justified in laying down the charge which he had taken up, not as a dignity, but as a cross and a burden. He resolved, however, to go up to London in the first instance, and to lay before the royal eye, which had hitherto been deluded with fallacious representations, a faithful picture of the distempered and convulsed state of Scotland. Having obtained an interview with the king, he declared that the severities practised upon objectors to the new establishment were such as his conscience could not justify, even for the sake of planting Christianity in a heathen land, and much less could he agree to them for an end so comparatively

*insignificant as that of substituting one form of ecclesiastical government for another.* He therefore besought permission to resign his bishopric, lest by retaining it he should seem to be a party to violences at which his principles and feelings revolted. His Majesty professed disapprobation of the manner in which the affairs of the Church were administered by Sharp, and seemed touched by the pathetic arguments of the virtuous advocate of toleration. He pledged himself to stop that application of the secular sword, against which Leighton protested, and he actually annulled the ecclesiastical commission, which endeavoured to goad dissenters into conformity by fines, and gaols, and corporal punishments. But he would not hear of Leighton's vacating his see, and the bishop consented at length to retain it, as he could not be ignorant that, by persisting in his purpose of retirement, he would throw away every chance of holding the king to those engagements into which he had just been impelled for the prosperity of the church.

Leighton had so fully made up his mind to withdraw at this time from his station, that he had taken a solemn farewell of his clergy before his departure for London. After winding up the regular business of the synod, in Oct. 1665, he informed them that there was a matter, which though of little concern to them and the church, he still thought it his duty to notify to them. He then announced his intention of retiring, and the reasons he assigned for it were, the sense he entertained of his own unworthiness to sustain so high an office, and his weariness of those contentions which had clothed the household of God in mourning, and seemed to be rather increasing than abating. "For myself," he said, "brethren, I have to thank you for the undeserved respect and kindness which I have all along experienced at your hands. Let me entreat your good construction of the poor endeavours I have used to serve you, and to assist you in promoting the work

of the ministry, and the great designs of the gospel. If in any thing, whether by word or deed, I have given you offence, or unnecessarily pained a single individual among you, I do earnestly and humbly crave forgiveness. My last advice to you is, that you continue in the study of peace and holiness, and grow and abound in love to your great Lord and Master, and to the souls for which he died. Finally, brethren, farewell; be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of peace and love shall be with you. Amen."

In the year 1667, Leighton was again forced from his beloved retirement to plead the cause of an oppressed and injured people. He went to London a second time, and remonstrated earnestly with the king against the oppressive measures still pursued. He had two audiences with King Charles, and represented, in strong but respectful language, the injustice and cruelty with which affairs were administered in Scotland. It was then that the good bishop took the liberty of proposing to the king, and even urging, that the Presbyterians should be treated with moderation and lenity. King Charles, as usual, gave him fair speeches and promises; but nothing effectual was done. Leighton returned to his diocese with a heavy heart, and laboured in word and doctrine; preaching and catechising throughout his diocese—a burning and a shining light, in the midst of discord and contention, violence and war all around. Meanwhile, his peaceful endeavours to soften the opposite parties were unremitting, but without success.

In the year 1670, without his solicitation, and against his will, he was appointed to the archbishopric of Glasgow; though he did not take possession of that see for twelve months after the appointment. He was strongly urged by the ruling men to accept of it, yet hesitated long. They knew that he was the only

man qualified to allay the discontents which prevailed in the west of Scotland ; and even the king ordered him to come up to court, for the purpose of overcoming his scruples. Knowing that Leighton had formed a scheme of accommodation between the Episcopalians and Presbyterians, which was for years the object of his desires and the subject of his study, Charles examined it, expressed his approbation, and promised assistance in carrying it into effect. This was the motive which induced him to accept of the archbishopric of Glasgow. The scheme itself was marked with moderation. Leighton wished each of the parties, for the sake of peace, to abate somewhat of their opinions respectively, as to the mode of government and worship ; nor did he conceive that truth would suffer by their union, but rather that the great ends of Christianity would be promoted. But various things rendered the scheme abortive. Both parties were too much exasperated, and too jealous of each other, to yield a single point. There is sufficient ground, likewise, to think that the king sent secret instructions to counteract the whole of Leighton's plan. In short, though the scheme did much honour to his liberal and pacific heart, it came to nothing. The Archbishop of Glasgow, however, did all in his power to reform the clergy, to correct wickedness and promote piety among the people, to suppress violence, and to soothe the minds of the Presbyterians. At Glasgow, Paisley, and Edinburgh, he held conferences with them on their principles, and on his scheme of accommodation, but without effect. The parties could not be brought to mutual indulgence, and far less to religious concord. The experience of episcopacy during the two preceding reigns was calculated to create disgust and aversion. It had been introduced, and was still continued, by military force. Besides, the Presbyterians knew that Leighton was the only Bishop, and almost the only man, in church or in state, who was cordial and zealous in making the proposal.



Leighton preached to the clergy of Glasgow, and in several discourses, both in public and private, he exhorted them to look up more to God, to consider themselves as the ministers of the cross of Christ, to bear the contempt and ill-usage they met with, as a cross laid on them for the exercise of their faith and patience, to lay aside all the appetites of revenge, to humble themselves before God, to have many days for secret fasting and prayers, and to meet often together that they might quicken and assist one another in those holy exercises, and then they might expect blessings from heaven upon their labours.”\*

Leighton made various attempts at reconciliation, but, undermined and opposed by his own party, for his blameless life and lenient principles and temper, and suspected by some of the other party through his gentleness, he felt his situation to be irksome and intolerable. Burdened above measure, he looked back to Dunblane with fond regret, and did not cease affectionately and solemnly to admonish the clergy of that diocese; as appears from the following letter to the Synod of Dunblane:

“ *Glasgow, April 6, 1671.* .

“ REVEREND BRETHREN,

“ The superadded burden that I have here, sits so heavy upon me, that I cannot escape from under it, to be with you at this time; but my heart and desires shall be with you, for a blessing from above upon your meeting. I have nothing to recommend to you, but (if you please) to take a review of things formerly agreed upon, and such as you judge most useful; to renew the appointment of putting them in practice; and to add whatsoever further shall occur to your thoughts, that may promote the happy discharge of your ministry, and the good of your people’s souls. I

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\* Burnet’s History of his own Times, Book II.

know I need not remind you, for I am confident you daily think of it, that the great principle of fidelity and diligence, and good success, in that great work, is love; and the great spring of love to souls, is love to Him that bought them. He knew it well himself, and gave us to know it, when he said, *Simon, lovest thou me? Feed my sheep, feed my lambs.* A deep impression of his blessed name upon our hearts, will not fail to produce a lively expression of it, not only in our words and discourses, in private and public, but will make the whole track of our lives to be a true copy and transcript of his holy life: and, if there be within us any sparks of that divine love, you know the best way not only to preserve them, but to excite them, and blow them up into a flame, is by the breath of prayer. Oh prayer! the converse of the soul with God, the breath of God in man returning to its original; frequent, and fervent prayer, the better half of our whole work, and that which makes the other half lively and effectual; as that holy company tells us, when, appointing deacons to serve the tables, they add, *But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and the ministry of the word.* And is it not, brethren, our unspeakable advantage, beyond all the gainful and honourable employments of the world, that the whole work of our particular calling is a kind of living in heaven, and besides its tendency to the saving of the souls of others, is all along so proper and adapted to the purifying and saving of our own? But you will possibly say, What does he himself do that speaks these things unto us? Alas! I am ashamed to tell you. All I dare say is this, I think I see the beauty of holiness, and am enamoured with it, though I attain it not; and how little soever I attain, would rather live and die in the pursuit of it, than in the pursuit, yea, or in the possession and enjoyment, though unpursued, of all the advantages that this world affords. And I trust, dear brethren, you are of the same opinion, and have the same

desire and design, and follow it both more diligently and with better success. But I will stop here, lest I should forget myself, and possibly run on till I have wearied you, if I have not done that already; and yet if it be so, I will hope for easy pardon at your hands, as of a fault I have not been accustomed to heretofore, nor am likely hereafter often to commit. To the all-powerful grace of our great Lord and Master, I recommend you, and your flocks, and your whole work amongst them; and do earnestly entreat your prayers for

Your unworthiest, but most affectionate,

Brother and servant,

R. LEIGHTON."

At length when Leighton found that all his efforts to unite the different parties were vain, he determined to resign. He considered that the dressing and undressing of his soul, as he used to call devotional exercises, was the business to which his few remaining days ought to be consecrated, and he "longed to escape, if only into the air among the birds," from the ungrateful service which he had not declined when summoned to it by a sense of duty.

The following extract of a letter to his sister, Mrs. Lightmaker, shews the state of his feelings:—"Our joint business is to die daily to this world and self, that what little remains of our life we may live to Him that died for us. For myself, to what purpose is it that I tell you that I grow old and sickly, and though I have here great retirement, yet I am still panting after a retreat from this place, and all public charge, and next to rest in the grave. It is the most pressing desire I have of any thing in the world; and, if it might be, near you. But our heavenly Father, we quietly resigning all to Him, both knows and will do what is best."

In April, 1673, he addressed the following letter to the synod of Glasgow:—

**“REVEREND BRETHREN,**

**“It is neither a matter of much importance, nor can I yet give you a particular and satisfying account of the reasons of my absence from your meeting, which I trust, with the help of a little time, will clear itself, but I can assure you I am present with you in my most affectionate wishes of the gracious presence of that Holy Spirit amongst you and within you all, who alone can make this and all your meetings, and the whole work of your ministry, happy and successful to the good of souls, and His glory who bought them with his own blood. And I doubt not that your own great desire, each for himself, and all for one another, is the same, and that your daily and great employment is by incessant and fervent prayer to draw down from above large supplies and increases of that blessed Spirit, which our Lord and Master hath assured us that our heavenly Father will not fail to give to them that ask it. And how extreme a negligence and folly were it to want so rich a gift, for want of asking; especially in those devoted to so high and holy a service, that requires such great degrees of that spirit of holiness and Divine love to purify their minds, and to raise them above their senses and this present world! Oh, my dear brethren! what are we doing, who suffer our souls to creep and grovel on this earth, and do so little aspire to the heavenly life of Christians, and more eminently of the messengers and ministers of God, as stars, yea, as angels, which he hath made spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire! Oh! where are souls to be found amongst us that represent their own original, that are possessed with pure and sublime apprehensions of God, the Father of spirits, and are often raised to the astonishing contemplation of his eternal and blessed being, and his infinite holiness, and greatness, and goodness, and are accordingly burnt up with ardent love! And where that holy fire is wanting, there can be no**

sacrifice, whatsoever our invention or utterance, or gifts may be, and how blameless soever the externals of our life may be, and even our hearts free from gross pollutions; for it is scarcely to be suspected that any of us will suffer any of those strange, yea, infernal fires of ambition, or avarice, or malice, or impure lusts and sensualities to burn within us, which would render us priests of idols, of airy nothings, and of dunghill gods—yea, of the very god of this world, the prince of darkness. Let men judge us and revile us as they please, that imports nothing at all; but God forbid any thing should possess our hearts but He that loved us, and gave himself for us; for we know we cannot be vessels of honour meet for the Master's use, unless we purge ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and empty our hearts of all things besides him, and even of ourselves, and of our own will, and have no more any desires nor delights but his will alone, and his glory, who is our peace, and our life, and our all. And truly I think it were our best and wisest reflection upon the many difficulties and discouragements without us, to be driven by them to live more within, as they observe of the bees, that when it is foul weather abroad they are busy in their hives. If the power of external discipline be enervated in our hands, yet who can hinder us to try and judge, and censure ourselves, and to purge the inner temples, our own hearts, with the more severity and exactness. And if we be dashed and bespattered with reproaches abroad, to study to be the cleaner at home; and the less we find of meekness and charity in the world about us, to preserve so much the more of that sweet temper within our own hearts, blessing them that curse us, and praying for them that persecute us; so shall we most effectually prove ourselves to be the children of our heavenly Father, even to their conviction who will scarcely allow us in any sense to be called his servants.

“As for the confusions and contentions that still

abound and increase in the church, and threaten to undo it, I think our wisdom will be to cease from man, and look for no help till we look more upwards, and dispute and discourse less, and fast and pray more, and so draw down our relief from the God of order and peace, who made the heavens and the earth.

“Concerning myself I have nothing to say, but humbly to entreat you to pass by the many failings and weaknesses you may have perceived in me during my abode amongst you; and if in any thing I have injured or offended you, or any of you, in the management of my public charge or in private converse, I do sincerely beg your pardon; though I cannot make any requital in that kind, for I do not know of any thing towards me from any of you that needs a pardon in the least, you having generally paid me more kindness and respect than a much better or wiser man could either have expected or deserved. Nor am I only a suitor for your pardon, but for the addition of a further charity, and that so great a one, that I have nothing to plead for it but that I need it much,—your prayers. And I am hopeful, as to that, to make you some little, though very disproportionate return; for whatsoever becomes of me, (through the help of God) while I live you shall be no one day of my life forgotten by

Your most unworthy, but most affectionate

Brother and Servant,

R. LEIGHTON.”

“P. S. I do not see whom it can offend, or how any can disapprove of it, if you will appoint a fast throughout your bounds, and entreat a blessing on the seed committed to the ground, and for the other grave causes that are still the same as they were the last year, and the urgency of them no whit abated, but rather increased; but in this I prescribe nothing, but leave it to your discretion and the direction of God.”

In the summer of 1673 the Archbishop again went to London to proffer his resignation to the king.

The king, however, still refused to accept it; but gave a written engagement to allow him to retire, after the trial of another year. The following is a copy of the King's engagement:—

“CHARLES R.

“It is our will and pleasure, that the present Archbishop of Glasgow do continue in that station for one whole year; and we shall allow liberty to him to retire from thence, at the end of that time.

“Given at our Court, at Whitehall, the 9th day of August, 1673; and of our reign, the 25th year. By his Majesty's command.”

On this assurance, Archbishop Leighton returned to Glasgow, and fulfilled the period of the engagement: it was a long year indeed to him. He often said, that there was now only one painful stage between him and rest. His determination to resign was now firmly fixed, and when the period elapsed, he went to London, and resigned his charge. The resignation was, according to promise, accepted, to the relief and joy of his heart.

The following are the reasons he assigned for resigning:

“Whatever others may judge, they that know what passed before my engaging in this charge, will not, (I believe) impute my retreat from it, to levity or unfixedness of mind, considering how often I declared beforehand, both by word and writing, the great suspicions I had, that my continuance in it would be very short; neither is it from any sudden passion, or sullen discontent, that I have now resigned it, nor do I know any cause imaginable for any such thing; but the true reasons of my retiring are plainly and briefly these:

I. The sense I have of the dreadful weight of whatsoever charge of souls, and all kind of spiritual inspec-

tion over all people, but much more over ministers, and withal of my own extreme unworthiness and unfitness for so high a station in the church ; and there is an episcopal act that is above all others formidable to me,—the ordaining of ministers.

II. The continuing and daily increasing divisions and contentions, and many other disorders of this church, and the little or no appearance of their cure for our time ; and as little hope amidst these contentions and disorders of doing any thing in this station to promote the great design of religion in the hearts and lives of men, which were the only reason of continuing in it, though it were with much pains and reluctance.

III. The earnest desire I have long had of a retired and private life, which is now much increased by sickness and old age drawing on, and the sufficient experience I have of the folly and vanity of the world.

To add any further discourse, a large apology in this matter were to no purpose, but instead of removing other mistakes and misconstructions, would be apt to expose me to one more ; for it would look like too much valuing either of myself, or of the world's opinion, both which I think I have too much reason to despise."

We have already mentioned, that the sister of Leighton was married to a gentleman of fortune and character, Edward Lightmaker, Esq. of Broadhurst, in Sussex. Mrs. Lightmaker was now a widow, and lived with her son, in the family mansion. Thither Leighton was invited to retire, and spend the remainder of his days. His sister's spirit was congenial with his own ; and young Lightmaker was a most dutiful son, and respectful nephew. Leighton saw a retreat from care and trouble provided for him by a kind Providence, and entered it with a grateful and disburdened soul. There he lived in great privacy ; and spent his time in study, devotion, and



doing good. In the parish of Broadhurst, and in the neighbouring parishes, he preached frequently; and his labours were eminently blessed. He received no company, excepting two or three select friends; and scarcely ever visited any but the poor and the sick. He enquired little after public affairs, and seemed to be almost entirely dead to the world. Epistolary correspondence with a few companions, which turned chiefly on experimental and practical religion, was one of his principal delights.

After spending five years in this manner, without any remarkable interruption of his solitude, his fears were much alarmed by an unexpected and private letter from the King's own hand. It was written as follows :

*“ Windsor, July 16, 1679.*

“ MY LORD,—I am resolved to try what clemency can prevail upon such in Scotland, as will not conform to the government of the church there; for effecting of which design, I desire that you may go down to Scotland with your first conveniency; and take all possible pains for persuading all you can of both opinions to as much mutual correspondence and concord as can be; and send me, from time to time, characters both of men and things. In order to this design, I shall send a precept for two hundred pounds sterling upon my Exchequer, till you resolve how to serve me in a stated employment.

“ Your loving friend,

“ CHARLES R.”

Addressed thus,

“ For the Bishop of Dunblane.”

It would appear from this address, that Leighton, after resigning the dignity of Archbishop of Glasgow, resumed that of Bishop of Dunblane. Or, perhaps, he simply retained the title, without the office. The matter referred to in the above letter being managed

secretly between the King and Leighton, we know not how he got himself excused from complying with the royal order. But certain it is, that he never again visited Scotland, or intermeddled with ecclesiastical affairs. He continued in his beloved retirement about ten years, edifying all around him by occasional advice and by his constant example, waiting for the time of his departure.

In the year 1684, Leighton was earnestly requested by Burnet to go up to London, and to visit Lord Perth, who had begun to feel compunction for his lamentable departure from the paths of virtue, and had expressed an earnest desire to have the benefit of Leighton's counsel. The hope of reclaiming that unhappy nobleman prevailed over personal considerations, and he went up to London accordingly, healthy in appearance, but with feelings of illness, which may account for his presentiment, that his dissolution was at hand. "The worse I am," said he, in the fulness of his self-denying benevolence, "the more I choose to go, that I may give one pull at your poor brother, and snatch him, if possible, from the infectious air of the court." Burnet had not seen him for a considerable time before, and was astonished at the freshness and vigour which appeared in him, notwithstanding his advanced age. His hair was still black, his motions were lively, and his devotion shone forth with the same lustre and vivacity as ever. On his friend expressing great pleasure at seeing him look so hearty, Leighton observed that, for all that, he was very near his end, and his work and journey both were now almost done. This answer made little impression on Burnet at the time, but his mind reverted to it after the event of three more days had stamped it with a prophetic emphasis.

The very next day he was attacked with an oppression on the chest, and with cold, and stitches, which proved to be the commencement of a pleurisy. He sunk rapidly, for on the following day, both speech and

sense had left him, and after panting for about twelve hours, he expired without a struggle in the arms of Bishop Burnet, his intimate friend, his ardent and affectionate admirer.

Nothing is recorded of his last hours, and indeed the disease that carried him off was, in its nature and rapid progress, such as to preclude much speaking. But no record is necessary of the dying moments of a man who had served God from his infancy, and whose path had been a shining light up to the moment when the shades of death closed over it. God was assuredly the strength of his heart in the hour of his last agony, and is now his glorious portion—his exceeding and eternal great reward. He entered into his rest on the 25th of June, A.D. 1684, in the seventy-fourth year of his age.

One remarkable circumstance accompanied the death of this great and good man. Though he had courted retirement all his life long, and had enjoyed it almost without interruption at Broadhurst for ten years, he was unexpectedly brought to London to see his esteemed friends once more, and to edify them by the closing scene.—Leighton, too, as he himself probably thought, received a strong hint in the course of Providence a short time before his death, that he must soon depart.—As he never pressed the payment of his revenue, if it may be called by that name, considerable arrears were owing to him in Scotland. These were left in trust with a friend, who made small and slow remittances; and the very last remittance which could be expected was sent a few weeks before Leighton's decease, "so that" (to adopt Bishop Burnet's happy phrase) "his provision and journey failed him both at once." But, the most remarkable circumstance of all, was, that God granted a singular wish which Leighton often expressed. He was in the habit of expressing a desire, with submission to the will of Heaven, that he might die from home, and at an inn. He considered such a

place as suitable to the character of the Christian pilgrim, to whom the world is an inn, a place of accommodation by the way, not his home; and that the spiritual sojourner steps with propriety from an inn to his Father's house.\* Leighton thought, also, that the care and concern of friends were apt to entangle and discompose the dying saint; and that the unfeeling attendance of strangers weaned the heart from the world, and smoothed the passage to heaven. Our author obtained his wish; for he died at the Bell-inn, in Warwick Lane; and none of his near relations were present during his last illness. If he had not the consolation to see his nearest relation, a beloved sister, yet the feelings of both were spared the agony of a final adieu.

His remains were conveyed to Horsted Keynes, the parish in which he had spent his concluding years, and were interred in an ancient chancel of the church. A simple epitaph marks his tomb.

The following are the testimonies of Bishop Burnet to the character of Leighton:

"I bear still the greatest veneration for the memory of that man than I do for any person, and reckon my early knowledge of him, which happened the year after this, [Leighton's promotion to a bishopric] and my long and intimate conversation with him that continued to his death for twenty-three years, among the greatest blessings of my life, and for which I must give account to God in the great day in a most particular manner." Again, he describes him as "a bishop that had the greatest elevation of soul, the largest compass of knowledge, the most mortified and most heavenly disposition that I ever yet saw in any mortal; he had the greatest parts as well as virtues, with the most perfect humility that I ever saw in man, and had a sublime strain of preaching, with so grave a gesture, and such a majesty both of thought and of language, and of pronunciation, that I never once saw a wandering eye where he

preached; and I have seen whole assemblies often melt in tears before him, and of him I can say with great truth, that, in a free and frequent conversation with him for above two-and-twenty years, I never knew him say an idle word or one that had not a direct tendency to edification: and I never once saw him in any other temper but that which I would wish to be in, in the last moments of my life. For that pattern which I saw in him, and for that conversation which I had with him, I know how much I have to answer to God; and, though my reflecting on that which I knew in him gives me just cause of being humbled in myself and before God, yet I feel no more sensible pleasure in any thing than in going over in my thoughts all I saw and observed in him."

Having mentioned these circumstances of his removal, we may briefly describe the person of this extraordinary man. Leighton was about the middle stature, well-proportioned, and of a fair complexion. There was an admirable mixture of gravity and sweetness in his countenance; his eyes beamed intelligence, sensibility, and benignity. He had a quickness in his motions, even in old age, which indicated the activity and energy of his mind. Contrary to the fashion of the times, he wore his own hair, which was black, and in advanced life, retained the original colour. Though he took little exercise, was a close student, extremely abstemious, and sometimes ailing, on the whole he enjoyed good health; and, at the advanced period of threescore years and ten, looked well.

We shall now proceed to record some miscellaneous particulars illustrative of the character and piety of Archbishop Leighton.

His character was eminently devotional; prayer and praise were his business and his pleasure. His manner of praying was very earnest and importunate. To the Lord's prayer he was particularly partial, and

he said of it, "Oh, the spirit of this prayer would make real Christians." Pointing to his books one day, he said to his nephew, "One devout thought is worth them all," meaning, no doubt, that no accumulation of knowledge is comparable in value with internal holiness.

His delight in the Holy Scriptures appears throughout all his writings, and the marks in the bibles he used, which are yet preserved, testify his diligence in examining the sacred records. With the book of Psalms he was particularly conversant, and would sometimes style it, by an elegant application of a scriptural metaphor, "a bundle of myrrh that ought to lie day and night in the bosom." (Song of Solomon, chap. i. ver. 13.) His nephew writes, There was scarce a line in that sacred Psalter that had passed without the stroke of his pencil.

The sabbath was his day of delight, and he would repair to God's house with a willing spirit, even when his body was infirm. One rainy Sunday, when he was unwell, he persisted in attending church, and said, in excuse of his apparent rashness, "Were the weather fair I would stay at home, but since it is foul, I must go, lest I be thought to countenance, by my example, the irreligious practice of letting trivial hindrances keep us back from public worship."

So impressively was religion marked in his whole conduct that his nephew, when a little child, struck with his reverential manner of returning thanks after a meal, observed to his mother, that "his uncle did not give thanks like other folks."

The character of Leighton was eminently distinguished by a longing after holiness. That he felt as a stranger and pilgrim on the earth, even while he filled the highest seat in the university, and was panting for immortality, is evident from the following extract of a letter of his to a friend:—

"SIR,

"Oh! what a weariness is it to live amongst men, and find so few men; and among Christians, and find so few Christians; so much talk and so little action; religion turned almost to a tune and air of words; and amidst all our pretty discourses, pusillanimous and base, and so easily dragged into the mire, self and flesh, and pride and passion domineering, while we speak of being in Christ, and clothed with him, and believe it because we speak of it so often and so confidently. Well I know you are not willing to be thus gulled, and having some glances of the beauty of holiness, aim no lower than perfection, which in the end we hope to attain; and in the mean while the smallest advances towards it are more worth than crowns and sceptres. I believe you often think on these words of the blessed champion Paul.\* There is a noble guest within us. Oh! let all our business be to entertain him honourably, and to live in celestial love within; ~~that~~ will make all things without be very contemptible in our eyes.—I should rove on did not I stop myself, it falling out well too for that, to be hard upon the post hours ere I thought of writing. Therefore, good night is all I add; for whatsoever hour it comes to your hand, I believe you are as sensible as I that it is still night; but the comfort is, it draws nigh towards that bright morning that shall make amends.

Your weary fellow-pilgrim,  
R. L."

To another person he writes:—

"Thorns grow every where, and from all things below, and to a soul transplanted out of itself into the root of Jesse, peace grows every where too, from

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\* 1 Cor. ix. 24, &c.

Him who is called our peace, and whom we still find the more to be so, the more entirely we live in him, being dead to this world, and self, and all things beside him. Oh, when shall it be? well let all the world go as it will, let this be our only pursuit and ambition, and to all other things *fiat voluntas tua, Domine*, 'Lord, thy will be done!'"

The following extract breathes the spirit of a Christian hero:—

"Courage, it shall be well! We follow a conquering general; yea, who hath conquered already; *et qui semel vicit pro nobis, semper vincit in nobis*; 'He who hath once conquered for us, always conquers in us.' For myself, at present, I am, (as we use to say) that is, this little contemptible lodge of mine, is not very well; but that will pass some way or other, as it is best; and even while the indisposition lasts, Oh! how much doth it heighten the sweet relish of peace within, of which I cannot speak too highly. But methinks I find a growing contempt of all this world, and consequently some further degrees of that quiet, which is only subject to disturbance by our inordinate fancies and desires, and receding from the blest centre of our rest: *for hurries of the world you know the way*,\* and in these retiring rooms we may meet and be safe and quiet."

He seldom discoursed on secular matters without happily and naturally throwing in some spiritual reflections; and it was his professed opinion, that nothing takes off more from the authority of ministers and the efficacy of their message, than a custom of vain and frivolous conversation. Indeed, he had brought himself into so composed a gravity (writes his first biographer), that I never saw him laugh,

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\* Isaiah xxvi. 20.—Come, my people, &c.



and but seldom smile; and he kept himself in such a constant recollection that I do not remember that I ever heard him say one idle word. He seemed to be in a perpetual meditation. Although he was not at all given to sermonize, yet any little incident that fell under his observation would cause some pious sentiment to drop from him, just as the slightest motion makes a brimful goblet run over. Meeting a blind beggar one day, he observed, "Methinks this poor sufferer cries out in behalf of the whole human race, as its representative, and let what he so earnestly craves be given him as readily as God bestows a cure on the spiritually blind who ask it." "It is extremely severe," said his sister, speaking to him of the season, "But thou, O God, hast made summer and winter," was his devout reply. Some one saying, "You have been to hear a sermon," "I met a sermon," was his answer, "a sermon *de facto*, (in reality,) for I met a corpse, and rightly and profitably are the funeral rites observed when the living lay it to heart." Thus he endeavoured to derive spiritual good out of every passing circumstance, and to communicate good to others.

In a soul so full of heaven, there was little room for earthly attachments. Indeed, the whole tone of his discourse, and the constant tenour of his life, evinced his detachment not only from pomps and riches, and delicacies, but from what are usually esteemed to be common comforts and necessities. To his judgment the middle condition of life best approved itself. "Better to be in the midst," were his words, "between the two pointed rocks of deep penury and high prosperity, than to be on the sharps of either." But his choice, to quote his own emphatic expression, was TO CHOOSE NOTHING, and he left it to a better wisdom than his own, to carve out his earthly lot. "If we are born to worldly riches, let us even take them, and endeavour to make friends

with them who shall stand us in good stead when we are put out of our stewardship ; but to desire that our journey should be by the troublesome and dangerous road of worldly prosperity is a mighty folly."

He was very abstemious in his food, and fasted often. He would say pleasantly, when dinner was announced, " Well, since we are condemned to this, let us sit down." When his sister once invited him to eat of a particular dish, extolling it as good, he declined it, saying, " What is it good for but to please a wanton taste? One thing forborne is better than twenty things taken." " But," answered Mrs. Lightmaker, " why were these things bestowed on us?" " To see," he rejoined, " how well we could forbear them ;" and then added, " Shall I eat of this delicacy while a poor man wants his dinner?" He thought people in general much too expensive and curious in the preparation of their meals, and wished this domestic profusion were turned into a channel of distribution to the poor. Every thing beyond the mere necessities of life, he termed the overflowings of a full cup, which ought not to run to waste, but descend into the poor man's platter. The gratifications of bodily appetite would not, he was persuaded, be so much reckoned on, if professed Christians had more " spiritual sensuality," as he often termed that ardent relish, which is the characteristic of renewed souls, for the meat and drink, the hidden manna of God's immortal banquet.

He used to compare a man's station in this life to an imprisonment, and observed that, " although it is becoming to keep the place of our confinement clean and neat, it were ill done to build upon it." His sister thinking he carried his indifference to earthly things too far, and that his munificence required some check, said to him once, " If you had a wife and children, you must not act thus;" his answer was, " I know not how it *would* be, but I know how it

*should* be.—“Enoch walked with God, and begat sons and daughters.”

The whole history of Leighton's life proclaims his abhorrence of persecution. It is related that his sister once asked him, at the request of a friend, what he thought was the mark of the Beast, at the same time adding, “I told the enquirer that you would certainly answer that you could not tell.” “Truly, you said well,” replied he, “but if I might fancy what it were, it would be something like a pair of horns, that pusheth his neighbours, as hath been so much seen and practised in church and state.” He also passed a severe sentence on the Romanists, “who, in their zeal for making proselytes, fetched ladders from hell to scale heaven;” and he deeply lamented that men of the reformed church should ever have given in to similar measures.

We have seen in the narrative of his public conduct how firmly he withstood the cruel measures set on foot to produce a uniformity of worship in Scotland. Swords and halberts, tongs and pincers, were, in his esteem, most improper instruments for advancing the knowledge and practice of religion. “For himself he would suffer any thing, rather than touch a hair of the head, even of those who laboured under such pitiable maladies, as errors in faith must be accounted. Or, if he did meddle with them, it should be with such a gentle touch, as would prove the friendliness of his disposition and purpose.” “I prefer,” he has been heard to say, “an erroneous honest man before the most orthodox knave in the world; and I would rather convince a man that he has a soul to save, and induce him to live up to that belief, than bring him over to my opinion in whatsoever else beside. Would to God that men were but as holy as they might be, in the worst of forms now among us! Let us press them to be holy, and miscarry if they can.” Being told of a person who had changed his persuasion,

all he said was, "Is he more meek, more dead to the world? If so, he has made a happy change."

How discreet and tender a friend he was to persons labouring under religious doubts and perplexities, the two following letters bear witness.

TO A LADY.

"Though I have not the honour to be acquainted with your Ladyship, yet a friend of ours has acquainted me with your condition, though I confess the unfittest of all men to minister any thing of spiritual relief to any person either by prayer or advice to you; but he could have imparted such a thing to none of greater secrecy, and withal, of greater sympathy and tender compassion towards such as are exercised with those kind of conflicts, as having been formerly acquainted with the like myself; all sorts of sceptical and doubtful thoughts touching those great points having not only passed through my head, but some of them have for some time sat most fast and painfully upon my mind; but in the name of the Lord they were at length quite dispelled and scattered. And oh! that I could live and bless Him who is my deliverer and strength, my rock and fortress where I have now found safety from these incursions; and I am very assured that you shall shortly find the same; live wait patiently on the Lord, and hope in him, for you shall receive him for the help of his countenance; and it is that alone that can enlighten you, and clear your mind of all those fogs and mists that now possess it, and calm the storms that are raised within it. You do well to read good books that are proper for your help, but rather the shortest and plainest than the more tedious and voluminous, that sometimes entangle a perplexed mind, yet more by grasping many more questions and answers, and arguments, than is needful; but, above all, still cleave to the incomparable spring of light and divine

comfort—the Holy Scriptures, even in despite of all doubts concerning them. And when you find your thoughts in disorder, and at a loss, entertain no dispute with them by any means at that time, but rather divert from them to short prayer or to other thoughts, and sometimes to well-chosen company, or the best you can have where you are; and at some other time, when you find yourself in a calmer and serener temper, and upon the vantage ground of a little more confidence in God, then you may resume your reasons against unbelief, yet so as to beware of casting yourself into new disturbances. For when your mind is in a sober temper, there is nothing so suitable to its strongest reason—nothing so wise and noble as religion, and to believe it is so rational that as now I am framed, I am afraid that my belief proceeds too much from reason, and is not so divine and spiritual as I would have it; only when I find (as in some measure through the grace of God I do,) that it hath some real virtue and influence upon my affections and track of life, I hope there is somewhat of a higher tincture in it. But, in point of reason, I am well assured, that all that I have heard from the wittiest atheists and libertines in the world, is nothing but bold ravery (raving) and madness, and their whole discourse a heap of folly and ridiculous nonsense; for what probable account can they give of the wonderful frame of the visible world, without the supposition of an eternal and infinite power and wisdom and goodness, that formed it and themselves and all things in it? And what can they think of the many thousands of martyrs, in the first age of Christianity, that endured not simple death, but all the inventions of the most exquisite tortures, for their belief of that most holy faith; which, if the miracles that confirmed it had not persuaded them so, they themselves had been thought the most prodigious miracles of madness in all the world? It is not want

of reason on the side of religion that makes fools disbelieve it, but the interest of their brutish lusts and dissolute lives makes them wish it were not true; and there is this vast difference betwixt you and them; they would gladly believe less than they do, and you would gladly believe more than they do: they are sometimes pained and tormented with apprehensions that the doctrine of religion is or may be true; and you are perplexed with suggestions to doubt of it, which are to you as unwilling and unwelcome as those apprehensions of its truth are to them. Believe it, madam, these different thoughts of yours, are not yours, but his that inserts them, and throws them as fiery darts into your mind, and they shall assuredly be laid to his charge, and not to yours. Think you that infinite goodness is ready to take advantage of his poor creatures, and to reject and condemn those that, against all the assaults made upon them; desire to keep their heart for him; and to acknowledge him, and to love him, and live to him? He made us, and knows our mould, and, as a father pities his children, pities them that fear him, for he is their Father, and the tenderest and kindest of all fathers; and as a father pities his child when it is sick, and in the rage and ravery of a fever, though it even utter reproachful words against himself, shall not our dearest Father both forgive and pity those thoughts in any child of his, that arise not from any wilful hatred of him, but are kindled in hell within them? And no temptation hath befallen you in this, but that which has been incident to men, and to the best of men; and their heavenly Father hath not only forgiven them, but in due time hath given them a happy issue out of them, and so he will assuredly do to you. In the mean time, when these assaults come thickest and most violently upon you, throw yourself down at his footstool, and say 'O God, Father of mercies, save me from this hell within me; I acknowledge, I adore,

I bless thee, whose throne is in heaven with thy blessed Son the crucified Jesus, and thy Holy Spirit; and though thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee; but I cannot think thou canst hate and reject a poor soul that desires to love thee, and cleave to thee as long as I can hold by the skirts of thy garment, until thou violently shake me off, which I am confident thou wouldst not do, because thou art love and goodness itself, and thy mercies endure for ever.' Thus, or in what other frame your soul shall be carried to vent itself into his bosom, be assured your words, yea, your silent sighs and breathings shall not be lost, but shall have a most powerful voice and ascend into his ear, and shall return to you with messages of peace and love in due time; and in the mean time, with secret supports that you faint not, nor sink in those deeps that threaten to swallow you up. But I have wearied you, instead of refreshing you. I will add no more, but that the poor prayers of one of the unworthiest caitiffs in the world, such as they be, shall not be wanting in your behalf; and he begs a share in yours, for neither you nor any in the world, need that charity more than he does. Wait on the Lord and be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."

The next is to some unknown Christian friend.

"CHRISTIAN FRIEND,

"Though I had very little vacant time for it, yet I would have seen you, if I could have presumed it might have been any way useful to the quickening of your mind. However, since I heard of your condition, I cease not, daily, as I can, to present it to Him who alone can effectually speak peace to your heart; and I am confident, in due time, will do so. It is he that stilleth the raging of the sea, and by a word can turn the violent storm into a great calm. What the parti-

cular thoughts or temptations are that disquiet you, I know not, but whatsoever they are, look above them, and labour to fix your eye on that infinite goodness which never faileth them that by naked faith do absolutely rely and rest upon it, and patiently wait upon Him who hath pronounced them all, without exception, blessed that do so. Say often within your heart, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him;" and if, after some interval, your troubled thoughts do return, check them still with the holy Psalmist's words:—"Why art thou cast down, O my soul," &c. If you can thoroughly sink yourself down through your own nothingness unto Him who is all, and entirely renouncing your own will, embrace that blest and holy will in all things; there I am sure you will find that rest which all your own distresses, and all the powers of darkness shall not be able to deprive you of. I incline not to multiply words; and, indeed, other advice than this, I have none to give you. The Lord of peace, by the sprinkling of the blood of his Son Jesus, and the sweet breathings of the great Comforter, his own Holy Spirit, give you peace in himself, Amen."

Humility was a beautiful trait in the character of this excellent man, which shaded and recommended his other great and good qualities. Far from loving the pre-eminence, and courting applause, he always kept in the back-ground, and was occasionally forced from retirement, only by an imperious sense of duty. Instead of pushing himself at any time into notice, he shrank as the sensitive plant when it is touched. The body of death sat heavy upon him, and, deeply sensible of his own imperfections, he grew in humility as he grew in holiness. His diffidence, however, was extreme; for, though frequently solicited to publish discourses, he would never consent; and none of his invaluable works were printed during his life.

"Burnet mentions, that "he seemed to have the



lowest thoughts of himself possible, and to desire that all other persons should think as meanly of him as he did of himself; and he bore all sorts of ill-usage and reproach, like a man that took pleasure in them."

The character of his mind is finely illustrated in the following passage from one of his letters :—

"And now I have begun, I would end just here; for I have nothing to say, nothing of affairs, (to be sure) private nor public; and to strike up to discourses of devotion, alas! what is there to be said but what you sufficiently know, and daily read, and daily think, and, I am confident, daily endeavour to do? And I am beaten back if I had a great mind to speak of such things, by the sense of so great deficiency in doing those things that the most ignorant Christians cannot choose but know. Instead of all fine notions, I fly to Κύρις ἰλήσων, Χριστὶ ἰλήσων (Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy). I think them the great heroes and excellent persons of the world that attain to high degrees of pure contemplation and divine love; but next to them, those that are aspiring to that, and falling short of it, fall down into deep humility and self-contempt, and a real desire to be despised and trampled on by all the world; and I believe, that they that sink lowest into that depth, stand nearest to advancement to those other heights; for the great King, who is the fountain of that honour, hath given us this character of himself, that He resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble. Farewell, my dear Friend, and be so charitable as sometimes in your addresses upwards, to remember a poor caitiff, who no day forgets you. •

December 13, 1676.

R. L."

On the eve of taking a bishopric, when he perceived how many obstacles there were to his doing the good he wished to others, he said, "Yet one benefit at least, will arise from it. I shall break that little idol of estimation my friends have for me, and which

I have been so long sick of." Though he could not be ignorant of the value set on his pulpit discourses, yet he looked upon himself as so ordinary a preacher, and so unlikely to do good, that he was always for giving up his place to other ministers; and after he became a bishop, he always preferred preaching to small congregations, and would never give notice beforehand when he was to fill the pulpit.

He was possessed of a warm and affectionate disposition, which was not extinguished by his superlative love to God, though it was always kept in due subordination. In his commentary on the Epistle of Peter, he remarks, that "our only safest way is to gird up our affections wholly," and he lived up to this principle. Accordingly, after avowing once how partial he was to the amiable character, and fine accomplishments of a relation, he added, "Nevertheless, I can readily wean myself from him, if I cannot persuade him to become wise and good. *Sine bonitate nulla majestas, nullus sapor.*" (Without goodness there is no majesty, no savour.) To him, as to that Holy One of whose spirit he partook largely, whoever did the will of his heavenly Father was more than natural kindred. Such, therefore, of his relations as were Christians indeed, had a double share of his tenderness; and to the strength of this two-fold bond, not less than to his heavenly-mindedness, we may ascribe his exclamation, on returning from the grave in which his brother-in-law had been interred, "Fain would I have thrown myself in with him." A beautiful extract from a letter which he wrote to that gentleman, on the death of a particularly sweet and promising child, to whom he himself was tenderly attached, may here find a suitable place.

"I am glad of your health, and recovery of your little ones; but indeed it was a sharp rebuke of a pen that told me your pretty Johnny was dead, and I felt truly more than to my remembrance I did the death of any

child in my life-time. Sweet thing ! and is he so soon laid to sleep ? Happy is he ! Though we shall have no more the pleasure of his lisping and laughing, he shall have no more the pain of crying, nor of being sick, nor of dying, and hath wholly escaped the trouble of schooling and all other sufferings of boys, and the riper and deeper griefs of riper years ; this poor life being all along nothing but a linked chain of many sorrows and many deaths. Tell my dear sister she is now so much more akin to the other world, and this will quickly be passed to us all. John is but gone an hour or two sooner to bed as children use to do, and we are undressing to follow. And the more we put off the love of this present world, and all things superfluous before-hand, we shall have the less to do when we lie down. It will refresh me to hear from you at your leisure, Sir, your affectionate brother,  
*Edinbro', Jan. 16th.* R. LEIGHTON."

We have seen that his walk was direct to heaven, and the drift of his conversation habitually unearthly. He died daily by the mortification of his natural appetites and affections, and he was visibly perfect in that frame of mind which he wondered should not be universal, " in which every second thought is of death." It was not in a melancholy tone that he touched on this serious subject ; for the illusions spread over earthly things had long since faded away from his eyes, which were fixed, in the sublime anticipations of faith, on those blissful realities that shall open upon the redeemed of the Lord when they have shaken off mortality. To him, therefore, death had lost its sting ; it was become a pleasant theme, and gave occasion to some of his most cheerful sayings. He would compare this heavy clod of clay with which the soul is encumbered to the miry boots of which the traveller gladly divests himself on finishing his journey ; and he could not disguise his own wish to be speedily un-

clothed, instead of lingering below till his garments were worn out and dropped off through age. In general, his temper was serene rather than gay : but his nephew states, that if ever it rose to an unusual pitch of vivacity, it was when some illness attacked him ; when, “ from the shaking of the prison-door, he was led to hope that some of those brisk blasts would throw them open, and give him the release he coveted.” Then he seemed to stand tip-toe on the margin of eternity in a delightful amazement of spirit, eagerly awaiting the summons to depart, and feeding his soul with the prospect of immortal life and glory. Sometimes, while contemplating his future resting-place, he would break out in that noble apostrophe of pious George Herbert :—

O let me roost and nestle there ;  
Then of a sinner thou art rid,  
And I of hope and fear.

Hearing once of the death of a portly man, he exclaimed, “ How is that A—— has broken through those goodly brick-walls, while I am kept in by a bit of flimsy deal ?” He would say, pleasantly, that he had his night-cap on, and rejoiced that it was so near bed-time, or rather so near the hour of rising, to one who had long lain awake in the dark ; and, pointing to the children of the family one evening, who were shewing symptoms of weariness, and importing to be undressed, he said, “ Shall I, who am threescore and ten, be loth to go to bed ?” This world he considered a state of nonage, and the land of mature man a land very far off. No saying of uninspired men pleased him better than that of Seneca :—*Illu dies, quam ut supremam metuisses, æternitatis natalis est.* (That day which you dread as the last, is the birth-day of eternity.) His alacrity to depart resulted from his earnest desire to “ see and enjoy perfection, in the perfect sense of it, which he could not do and live.”

"That consummation," he would say, "is only a hope deferred, but when it cometh it will be a tree of life." The following is an extract of a letter supposed to have been written a short time before his death :

"I find daily more and more reason, without me, and within me, yet much more to pant and long to be gone. I am grown exceedingly weary in writing and speaking, yea, almost in thinking, when I reflect how cloudy our clearest thoughts are ; but I think again what other can we do till the day breaks, and the shadows flee away, as one that lieth awake in the night must be thinking ; and one thought that will likely oftenest return, when by all other thoughts he finds little relief is, *When will it be day ?*"

Yet Leighton, for the comfort of weak believers be it recorded, did not pretend to an absolute assurance of final salvation. Conversing one day, in his wonted strain of holy animation, of the blessedness of being fixed as a pillar in the heavenly Jerusalem to go no more out, (Rev. iii. 12.) he was interrupted by a near relation exclaiming, "Ah ! but you have assurance."—"No, truly," he replied ; "only a good hope, and a great desire to see what they are doing on the other side, for of this world I am heartily weary."

We shall now present our readers with a sketch of the leading excellences of Leighton's writings, abridged from his Life written by the Rev. J. Jerment, to which we are indebted for several extracts.

Leighton's acquaintance with classical literature was various and profound, but divinity was his principal study. His discourses possess uncommon merit ; and, though they must labour under the disadvantages of posthumous works, none of them being intended by him for the public eye, and therefore not having been touched by his finishing hand, they nevertheless rank high both in matter and language. His works may be compared to a river, deep and clear,

gentle and pleasant, which, winding through the vallies, refreshes, adorns, and fructifies, wherever it flows. The streams have, for many years, made glad the city of God.

Leighton preached the gospel both in the restricted and in the enlarged sense of the term. The glad tidings of full and free salvation through the righteousness of Jesus Christ, the grace of God, and the work of the Holy Spirit, were published by this faithful messenger. Yet, he neglected not to preach the moral law, for the conviction of transgressors, and as an immutable rule of life to those who believe. Nay, all revealed truths, which form the links of one chain, and constitute the parts of one fabric, were attended to by Leighton, and exhibited in their proper place, order, and connection. The perfections, personal subsistence, and counsels of the Deity; the primitive state and the fall of man; the guilt and depravity of the human race; the various workings and effects of moral corruption; the essential and mediatorial characters of the Saviour; the divinity of his person, his substitution in the place of the guilty, and his complete satisfaction for sin; the personality, divinity, operations, and influences of the Holy Spirit; the free call of the gospel; the necessity of an appropriating faith; justification freely by grace; the necessity of a new nature, and of holiness; perseverance in true religion; the future felicity of the righteous, and eternal misery of the wicked;—these were the topics on which this preacher of righteousness dwelt with perspicuity and energy. One or other of them occurs in every page, almost in every sentence of his writings. Generally they appear as rich clusters, not as two or three berries on the uppermost bough. The trees of knowledge and of life, laden with the choicest fruits, were never perhaps more closely united than in the writings of Leighton.

The language of Leighton is unexceptionable, and

extremely guarded ; he watches with the most vigilant care against legality on the one hand and antinomianism on the other.

Sublimity of thought, and sometimes of language, is another quality of his writings. The mind of Leighton was of a superior cast, and fitted to catch a portion of celestial elevation and fire. Of an ardent and feeling soul, he kindled and thrilled at the sight of objects adapted by their own nature, and by the manner of representing them, to astonish and entrance. Few pages in his works are without instances of sublimity, especially of sublime thought. While there is nothing low and grovelling, he frequently rises to the majestic. Two passages of this kind may be mentioned, and they are two among a great multitude equally grand.

The first is in his discourse on Isaiah lx. 1. "Arise, shine, for thy light is come," &c.

"Arise then, *for the glory of the Lord is risen.* The day of the gospel is too precious that any of it should be spent in sleep and idleness, or worthless business. Worthless business detains many of us ; *arise*, immortal souls, from moiling in the dust, and working in the clay like *Egyptian* captives. Address yourselves to more noble work ; there is a Redeemer come that will pay your ransom, and rescue you from such vile service, for more excellent employment. It is strange how the souls of Christians can so much forget their first original from heaven, and their new hopes of returning thither, and the rich price of their redemption, and, forgetting all these, dwell so low, and dote so much upon trifles ; how is it that they hear not their well-beloved's voice, crying, *Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away ?*. Though the eyes of true believers are so enlightened, that they shall not sleep unto death, yet their spirits are often seized with a kind of drowsiness and slumber, and sometimes even then, when they should be of most activity. The time

of Christ's check to his three disciples made it very sharp, though the words are mild: *What! could you not watch with me one hour?* Shake off, believing souls, that heavy humour. *Arise*, and satiate the eye of faith with the contemplation of Christ's beauty, and follow after him till you attain the place of full enjoyment. And you others that never yet saw him, *Arise*, and admire his matchless excellency. The things you esteem great, are so, but through ignorance of his greatness; his brightness, if you saw it, would obscure to you the greatest splendor of the world, as all those stars that never go down upon us, yet they are swallowed up in the surpassing light of the sun when it arises. *Arise from the dead, and he shall give you light. Arise, and work while it is day, for the night shall come wherein none can work*, says our Saviour himself. Happy are they that arise early in the morning of their youth; for the day of life is very short, and the art of Christianity long and difficult. Is it not a grievous thing that men never consider, why they came into the world, till they be upon the point of going out again, nor think how to live, till they be summoned to die? But most of all unhappy, he that never wakens out of that pleasing dream of false happiness, till he fall into eternal misery: *arise*, then, betimes, and prevent this sad awakening."

The second is from his sermon on John **xxi. 22**—"What is that to thee? Follow thou me."

"Let us therefore follow the Holy Jesus. Other concerns concern us not, compared to this. *What is that to thee?* may be said of all things beside this. All the world is one great impertinency to him who contemplates God, and his Son Jesus. Great things, coaches, furniture, or houses, concern the outward pomp or state of the world, but not the necessities of life; neither can they give ease to him that is pinched with any one trouble. He that hath twenty houses, lies but in one at once; he that hath twenty dishes on



works ; a quality <sup>which</sup> is easier to conceive and feel, than to express or describe. The word *unction* conveys the best idea of it.

Seriousness is essential to unction ; and this includes not merely warmth, but a certain heavenly, penetrating strain in the turn of sentiment and expression : when discourses are delivered, there must be a similar strain in the modulation of the voice, and in the whole manner.

To impart sap, and vital heat, the pure gospel is necessary ; and for the want of it, no abilities, no correctness, no elegance, can possibly compensate. Sermons, from which the peculiar doctrines of Christianity are almost wholly excluded, may paint to the imagination, but never to the heart : they exhibit in their finest imagery only beautiful icicles, and all their flowers bloom in the polar regions. These may be the effect, it is true, of a lively and warm fancy : but the heart of the preacher appears to be untouched, and discovers nothing of the ardour and sweets of devotion.

Leighton's discourses have a high degree of warmth and unction. They are a sweet savour of Christ, and as ointment poured forth. Their beauty is as the olive-tree, and their smell as Lebanon. The face of the preacher is anointed with the oil of gladness, shines with heavenly lustre, and diffuses fragrance all around. One cannot read a page, without being moved and refreshed : a soft balmy sensation thrills through the soul.

The works of Leighton, however, are not merely suitable but highly gratifying to a spiritual taste. Without a single exception, they are eminently practical.

Leighton excels in explaining and urging religious and moral duties ; and he always grafts and builds them on the doctrines of the gospel. These are the proper root of the tree, and the only foundation of a good superstructure.

Leighton never loses sight, for a moment, either of the necessity of religious and moral conduct, or of the place which it should occupy. Some of his discourses are entirely practical; but still he keeps in view the root and foundation. In other discourses, which are doctrinal, he intersperses practical hints; and shews at large the necessity of obedience to the law, in both its essential parts. His highest raptures are the reverse of enthusiasm: as they lead, with increased force, to the way of the divine commandments.

But the crowning excellence of Leighton's discourses is, the deep and rich vein of experimental religion which runs through them all. Experimental religion is to the practice of piety and morality, what life is to motion, or the heart to the body; the necessary spring and impulse. The former, too, always includes proper exercise of soul, or is accompanied with it. The God of grace meets those who rejoice, and work righteousness; those who remember him in his ways; and ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherwards. Discourses, in which religious experience and religious exercises are totally omitted, or scarcely ever touched, are essentially defective. The tree must be made good, that the fruit may be sound and sweet; the fountain be purified, that the waters may be salutary. Accordingly, Leighton often urges the absolute necessity of the first and radical experience of religion, in a change of nature. He dwells frequently on religious experiences and exercises, both pleasant and painful; on the various workings of gracious principles, and of remaining depravity. Our author, at the same time, warns against enthusiasm; or heat without light, impression without practice. While on the one hand he directs and comforts the genuine saint; on the other he exposes and alarms the self-deceiver.—Some have remarked, and justly, that among the reasons why the gospel is committed to men, and not to angels, God in wisdom and

kindness intended that his servants should be capable of entering deeply into the feelings of their hearers, of experiencing the power of saving grace, and exemplifying all the duties of religion. Leighton, in this point of view, was an experimental and practical preacher. He writes like one who knew and felt the terrors of the Lord, and who had also tasted that the Lord is gracious. He appears, in various instances, to be detailing his own experience and exercises; and sometimes passes from instruction to confession, ejaculation, and praise. As a nurse, he is not only gentle, and cherisheth; but takes by the arms, and teaches to go; and feeds his beloved charge with the same provision which, like the milk of a nurse, had been first received and digested by himself.

There is an inflexible and happy uniformity in Dr. Leighton's writings. Whether he was the Presbyterian minister of Newbottle, or the Bishop of Dunblane, or the Archbishop of Glasgow; whether he preached in the most obscure parish church, or in the most conspicuous and magnificent cathedral; before illiterate rustics, or before the high court of parliament, he published the gospel of grace with the same plainness, and the same warmth.

The following description of his principal works is abridged from the Rev. J. N. Pearson's *Life of Leighton*,\* to which we are considerably indebted for several portions of his history.

"The work, which is the crown of his posthumous glory in the universal church, is the *Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Peter*. It is a treasury of sound experimental divinity, and argues an extraordinary ripeness of Christian attainments. It was probably delivered from the pulpit, and is drawn out in the familiar form of exposition; the clauses, and sometimes the emphatic words of each text being ordinarily ex-

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\* Published in 1825, by James Duncan, London.

plained in course, and no artificial arrangement observed in discussing the several subjects introduced by the Apostle. Still the general scope and coherence of each passage are carefully kept in view, and the main truth asserted or proved is never lost sight of in unfolding the particular propositions from which it is educed. This work will always class among the first of uninspired writings, and can never cease to constitute the admiration and delight of the Christian and the scholar.

"Next in worth to this Commentary, are his Expositions of "The Creed;" "The Lord's Prayer;" and the "Ten Commandments;" which seem to have been carefully pondered. The fragment of a Commentary on the first eight chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel, has touches of his fine genius, and is imbued with his heavenly spirit. His Meditations on Psalms iv. xxxii. and cxxx., and his Lectures on Psalm xxxix. are sketches only, but they shew the hand of a master. The Meditations which were spoken in Latin to the Edinburgh Collegians, are felicitous essays, glistening with holy animation, and are more classically adorned than the Expository Lectures, not however in a degree to unfit them for the closet of unlettered devotion.

"In the Latin Prelections, the principal doctrines of the Christian faith are developed with exquisite learning, judgment, and piety. The Paræneses are short exhortations to the scholars about to graduate. In them Leighton guards his auditors against an overweening estimate of human learning, and excites them to seek the knowledge of God as he reveals himself in the Gospel."

We now add a few extracts from Dr. Doddridge's Preface to Leighton's works.

"On the whole, the preparing these volumes for the press, hath generally taken up a little of my time in the intervals of other business daily, for several

months; but I am far from repenting of the labour I have bestowed on it. The delight and edification which I have found in the writings of this *wonderful man* (for such I must deliberately call him) would have been a full equivalent for my pains, separate from all prospect of the effect which they might have upon others. For, truly, I know not that I have ever spent a quarter of an hour in reviewing any of them, but even amidst that interruption, which a critical examination of the copy would naturally give, I have felt some impression which I could always wish to retain. I can hardly forbear saying, as a considerable philosopher and eminent divine said to me:—"There is a spirit in Archbishop Leighton I never met with in any human writings; nor can I read many lines in them without being moved."

"Indeed it would be difficult for me to say where, but in the sacred oracles, I have found such heart-affecting lessons of simplicity and humility, candour and benevolence, exalted piety, without the least tincture of enthusiasm, and an entire mortification to every earthly interest, without any mixture of splenetic resentment. Nor can I ever sufficiently admire that artless manner in which he lays open as it were his whole breast to the reader, and shows, without seeming to be at all conscious of it himself, all the various graces that can adorn and ennoble the Christian, running like so many veins of precious ore in the rich mine where they grew. And hence, if I mistake not, is that wonderful energy of his discourses, obvious as they seem, unadorned as they really are, which I have observed to be owned by persons of eminent piety in the most different ranks, and amidst all the variety of education and capacity that can be imagined. As every eye is struck by consummate beauty, though in the plainest dress, and the sight of such an object impresses more than any laboured description of complexion, features, or air, or any harangue on the nicest

rules of proportion which could come into consideration, so in the works of this *great adept in true Christianity*, we do not so much hear of goodness as see it in its most genuine traces; see him a living image of his Divine Master, for such indeed his writings show; I had almost said demonstrate him, to have been, by such internal characters, as surely a bad man could not counterfeit, and no good man can so much as suspect.

“I am very sensible of it, as an honour done to me in the course of Divine Providence, that the task I have here executed should so very unexpectedly be devolved upon me. But I shall be gloriously rewarded, if the labour I have bestowed upon it be the occasion of promoting those great ends, which animated the discourses and actions of the holy man, who has now dwelt so long among the blessed inhabitants of that world, after which he so ardently aspired, while yet amongst mortals. And let me be permitted to add, that I have some secret hope this publication, in these circumstances, may, among other good effects, promote that spirit of catholicism, for which Leighton was so remarkable; and extend it among various denominations of Christians in the northern and southern parts of our island. If the sincerest language or actions can express the disposition of the heart, it will here be apparent that a diversity of judgment with regard to episcopacy, and several forms both of discipline and worship connected with it, have produced in my mind no alienation, no indifference, towards *Archbishop Leighton*, nor prevented my delighting in his works, and profiting by them. In this respect I trust my brethren in Scotland will, for their own sake, and that of religion in general, show the like candour. On the other side, as I have observed with great pleasure and thankfulness, how much many of the established clergy in this part of Britain are advancing in moderation towards their dissenting brethren, I am

fully assured they will not like these excellent pieces the worse for having passed through my hand. It is truly my grief that any thing should divide me from the fullest communion with those to whom I am united in bonds of as tender affection as I bear to any of my fellow-christians. And it is my daily prayer that God will, by his gentle, but powerful influence on our minds, mutually dispose us more and more for such a further union as may most effectually consolidate the Protestant cause, establish the throne of our gracious Sovereign, remove the scandals our divisions have occasioned, and strengthen our hands in those efforts by which we are attempting, and might then, I hope, more successfully attempt, in the service of our common Christianity. In the mean time, I desire most sincerely to bless God for any advances that are made towards it."

We shall close this sketch of Archbishop Leighton's Life and Writings by a few extracts, which will give some idea of the beauties and excellences of his Works. The first is on the same subject as the preceding remarks of Dr. Doddridge, namely,

#### CHRISTIAN UNION AND LOVE.

*Be ye all of one mind—love as brethren.* (1 Peter iii. 8.)

"Of one mind" doth not only mean union in judgment, but it extends likewise to affection and action. For Christians to be of one mind is not a careless indifferency; this is not a loving agreement, but a dead stupidity, as it is accounting all questions in religion but matters of words and names, as Gallio did. This would not be a knitting together, but a freezing together, as cold congregates all bodies how heterogenous soever, sticks, stones, and water; but heat makes first

a separation of different things, and then unites those that are of the same nature.

All that implicit *Romish* agreement that they boast of, what is it but a brutish ignorance of spiritual things, authorized and recommended for that very purpose. 'Tis an easy way to agree if all will put out their eyes, and follow the blind guiding of their judge of controversies.

We shall give some few rules that may be of use to every particular Christian towards this common Christian good of unity of mind.—1st, Beware of two extremes that often cause divisions—*captivity to custom* on the one hand, and *affectation of novelty* on the other. 2dly, Labour for a stayed mind, that will not be tossed with every wind of doctrine. (Eph. iv. 14.) 3dly, In unclear and doubtful things, be not pertinacious, as the weakest minds are readiest to be upon seeming reasons, which tried, will possibly fall to nothing; yet they are most assured, and cannot suffer a different thought in any from their own. There is naturally this *Popeness* in every man's mind, and most, I say, in the shallowest—a kind of fancied infallibility in themselves, which makes them *CONTENTIOUS*, (contrary to the Apostle's rule, Phil. ii. 3. let nothing be done through strife and vain glory) and as earnest upon differing in the *smallest* punctilio as in a high article of faith. 4thly, Join that which is then the spirit of love in this particular. Not at all abating affection for every slight difference, (and this the most are a little to blame in) whereas the abundance of that should rather fill up the gap of these petty disagreements, that they do not appear, nor be at all sensibly to be found.

In your private society seek unanimously your own and each other's spiritual good, having one heart and mind as Christians. The peculiar converse of Christians is to put one another in mind of heaven, and things that are heavenly.



“Love as brethren.”—Love is the cause of union. They that have the same Spirit animating them cannot but have the same mind and the same feelings. And this Spirit is derived from that Head—Christ, in whom Christians live and move, and have their being. He is the first-born among many brethren. (Rom. viii. 29.) Christ is not ashamed to call them brethren. (Heb. ii. 11.)

Where this love is and abounds, it will banish far away all those dissensions and bitternesses, and those frivolous mistakings which are so frequent among the most. It will pass by many offences and failings; it will cover a multitude of sins. But many that are called Christians are not indeed of this brotherhood, but are restless, unquiet spirits, biting and devouring one another. (Gal. v. 15.)

I beseech you, adorn your holy profession, and testify yourselves the disciples and brethren of Jesus Christ by this mutual love. Seek to understand what it is; and to know it more practically, consider that source of love—that love that the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; (1 John iii. 1.) and so be brethren, and thence draw more of this sweet stream of love. God is love, says the Apostle; (1 John iv. 8.) therefore surely where there is most of God, there is most of this divine grace—this holy love. Look upon, and study much, that infinite love of God, and his Son Jesus Christ, towards us. He gave his only-begotten Son. The Son gave himself, and this he hath recommended to us, that even as he loved us, so should we love one another. (John xv. 12.) We know we cannot reach this highest pattern; that is not meant, but the more we look on it, the higher we shall reach in this love, and shall learn some measure of such love on earth as is in heaven, and that which so begins here, shall be perfected there.

## SIN THE CAUSE OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.

At his apprehending, besides the soldiers, that invisible crowd of the sins he was to suffer for, came about him, for it was they that laid strongest hold on him ; he could easily have shaken off all the rest, as appears, John xviii. 6. but our sins laid the arrest on him, being accounted his, as it is in Ps. xl. 12, "mine iniquities." Now amongst these were even those sins we call small ; they were of the number that took him, and they were amongst those instruments of his bloodshed. If the greater were as the spear that pierced his side, the less were as the nails that pierced his hands and his feet, and the very least as the thorns that were set on his precious head. And the multitude of them made up what was wanting in their magnitude ; though they were small, they were many.

## THE PARDON OF SIN.

The soul, perplexed about the pardon of sin, finds no relief in all other enjoyments ; all propositions of lower comforts are unsavoury and troublesome to it. Tell it of peace and prosperity ; say, however the world go, you shall have ease and pleasure, and you shall be honoured and esteemed by all ; yea, though you could make a man sure of these, yet, if his conscience be working and stirred about the matter of his sin, and the wrath of God, which is tied close to sin, he will wonder at your impertinency, in that you speak so far from the purpose. Say what you will of these, he still asks, 'What do you mean by this? those things answer not me. Do you think I can find comfort in them, so long as my sin is unpardoned, and there is a sentence of eternal death standing above my head? I feel even an impress of somewhat of that hot indignation ; some flashes of it flying and lighting upon the face of my soul ; and how can I take pleasure in these things you speak of? And though I should be senseless,

and feel nothing of this all my life, yet how soon shall I have done with it, and the delights that reach no further! and then to have everlasting burnings, eternity of wrath to enter to; how can I be satisfied with that estate?' All you offer a man in this posture is, as if you should set dainty fare, and bring music with it, to a man lying almost pressed to death under great weights, and should bid him eat and be merry, but lift not off his pressure: you do but mock the man, and add to his misery. On the other side, he that hath not but a view of his Christ, and reads his own pardon in Christ's sufferings, can rejoice in this, in the midst of all other sufferings, and look on death without apprehension, yea, with gladness, for the sting is out. Christ hath made all pleasant to him by this one thing, that "he suffered once for sins." Christ hath perfumed the cross, and the grave, and made all sweet. The pardoned man finds himself light, skips and leaps, and, "through Christ strengthening him," he can encounter any trouble. If you think to shut up his spirit in outward sufferings, he is now, as Sampson in his strength, able to carry away on his back the gates with which you would enclose him. Yea, he can submit patiently to the Lord's hand in any correction; 'Thou hast forgiven my sin, therefore, deal with me as thou wilt, all is well.'

#### THE AFFLICTED CONSCIENCE.

Ask an afflicted conscience, if JESUS, that is, a Saviour, be not a precious word, that hath a sovereign value, both a refreshing smell and a healing virtue. The hammer of the law may break a stony heart in pieces, but it is only the blood of Jesus that can soften it. And where it is effectually poured, either upon a wounded soul, it heals it, or upon a hard heart, it molifies it. For that other name, CHRIST, well may it be called "an ointment poured forth," for it signifies his

anointing. And that the sweet savour of this name may effect, read but that one passage, (Isa. lxi. 1.) "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek," &c. What inestimable riches of consolation are there in each of these effects, to which Christ was anointed ! and yet we find not a word among them all for a proud still-necked sinner. Here are "good tidings," but it is to the meek ;—comfortable "binding up," but it is for the "broken-hearted;"—liberty, but it is for captives and prisoners, groaning under their chains, and desirous to be delivered ; not for such as delight in their bondage. There is "oil of joy," and "garments of praise," but they are provided for mourning dejected spirits that need them ; not for the impenitent. On the contrary, there is a terrible word interjected in the midst of these promises, "The day of vengeance of our God," and that is the portion of Christ's enemies, and such are all incorrigible sinners.

When you look through a red glass, the whole heavens seem bloody, but through pure uncoloured glass, you receive the clear light, that is so refreshing and comfortable to behold. When sin unpardoned is betwixt, and we look on God through that, we can perceive nothing but anger and enmity in his countenance : but make Christ once the medium, our pure Redeemer, and through him, as clear transparent glass, the beams of God's favourable countenance shine in upon the soul. The Father cannot look upon his well-beloved Son, but graciously and pleasingly. God looks on us out of Christ, sees us rebels, and fit to be condemned ; we look on God as being just and powerful to punish us ; but when Christ is betwixt, God looks on us in him, as justified, and we look on God in him as pacified, and see the smiles of his favourable countenance. Take Christ out, all is terrible ; interpose him, all is full of peace : therefore set him always betwixt, and by him we shall believe in God.

It is the want of activity of faith on Jesus, that keeps us so imperfect, and wrestling still with our corruptions without any advancement. We wrestle in our own strength too often, and so are justly, yea, necessarily, foiled; it cannot be otherwise till we make him our strength. This we are still forgetting, and we had need to be put in mind of it, and frequently to recollect it. We would be at doing for ourselves, and insensibly fall into this folly, even after much smarting for it, if we be not watchful against it; there is this wretched natural independency in us, that is so hard to beat out. All our projectings are but castles in the air, imaginary buildings without a foundation, till once laid on Christ. But never shall we find heart peace, sweet peace, and progress in holiness, till we be driven from it, to make him all our strength; till we be brought to do nothing, to attempt nothing, to hope or expect nothing, but in him; and then shall we indeed find his fulness and all-sufficiency, and "be more than conquerors through Him who hath loved us."

#### THE SOUL RESIGNED TO CHRIST.

When a soul is busy asking after Jesus Christ, if it be inquired, "What would you do with him?" "Why this is my purpose," will it say, "I would worship him; I would not only be saved by him, but I would fall down and adore him, and acknowledge him my King; and if I had any thing better than another I would offer it him." "But what hast thou? Hast thou rich presents for him?" "Alas! no. I am a foolish and a poor creature, and I have nothing to offer." "Nothing! Hast thou a heart?" "Yes; a heart I have: but, alas! there can be nothing more unfit for him, and unworthy of him; it is dark, and foul, and hard; all disorder and filthiness." "Yet wilt thou give it him as it is, and be willing that he use and dispose of it as it pleases him?" "Oh! that

he would accept of it, 'that he would take it upon any terms. Here it is; if it would fly out from this offer, I would he would lay hold of it. Oh! that it were once received by him; that it were in his hand, and then let him do with it what seems him good."—"Sayest thou so? Then it is done. Give it really and freely, and he will take and make it better, at its worst, than all the gold, and frankincense, and myrrh, of all those rich countries where they abound; and will purify, rectify, and make it quite another thing than it is; and it shall never repent thee to have made a gift of it to him. He shall frame it to his own likeness, and in return will give thee himself, and be thine for ever."

#### WHO IS HE THAT CONDEMNETH?

I add yet further, If thou sayest yet, that thou findest none of all this, yet I say, there is warrant for thee to believe and lay hold on this righteousness here held forth, to the end that thou mayest then find those things in thee, and find comfort in them. Thou art convinced of ungodliness, then believe on him that justifies the ungodly; thou art condemned, yet Christ is dead and risen; flee to him as such, as the Lamb slain, "he that was dead and is alive," and then say, "Who is he that condemneth?" It is Christ that died, or rather that is risen. Who shall accuse? It is true, they may clamour and make a noise, both satan and thy conscience, but how can they fasten any accusation on thee? If they dare accuse, yet they cannot condemn, when the Judge hath acquitted thee, and declared thee free, who is greater than all, and hath the absolute power of the sentence; all charges and libels come too late, after he hath once pronounced a soul righteous. And who shall condemn? "It is Christ that died." If the sentence of the law be brought forth, yet here is the answer, it ought not to be twice satisfied; now once it is in Christ, he hath died, and that stands for the believer. Whosoever

flees to him, and lays hold on him for life, he cannot die again ; nor canst thou die, for whom he died once. "Or rather is risen ;" that raises the assurance higher, and sets it firmer ; for this evidences that in his death all was paid. When he being the surety and seized on for death, once death's prisoner, yet was set free, this clears the matter that there is no more to be said. And yet further, in sign that all is done,\*he is raised to the height of honour above all principalities and powers, is set at the right hand of the Father ; and there he sits, and lives to make intercession, to sue out the fulfilling of all for believers, the bringing of them home,—lives to see all made good that he died and covenanted for.

#### GLORYING IN CHRIST.

If we knew Him rightly, we would not sell the least glance or beam of the light of his countenance for the highest favour of mortal men, though it were constant and unchangeable, which it is not. It is ignorance of Christ that maintains the credit of those vanities we admire. The Christian that is truly acquainted with him, enamoured with the brightness of his beauty, can generously trample upon the smilings of the world with the one foot, and her frownings with the other. If he be rich or honourable, or both, yet he glories not in that ; but Christ, who is "the glory of the Lord," is even then his chiefest glory ; and the light of Christ obscures that worldly splendour in his estimation. And, as the enjoyment of Christ overtops all his other joys, so it overcomes his griefs. As that great light drowns the light of prosperity, so it shines bright in the darkness of affliction : no dungeon so close that can keep out the rays of Christ's love from his beloved prisoners. The world can no more take away this light, than it can give it.

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# CHRISTIAN BIOGRAPHY.

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## THE LIFE OF THE REV. PHILIP HENRY; BY HIS SON, REV. MATTHEW HENRY, **Abridged.**

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Religious Tract Society,

*Instituted 1799;*

PUBLISHED AND SOLD AT THE DEPOSITORY, 56, PATER-  
NOSTER-ROW; BY J. NISBET, 21, BERNERS STREET;  
AND OTHER BOOKSELLERS.



  
**Printed by J. Rider, Little Britain, London.**

# THE LIFE OF THE REV. PHILIP HENRY.

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## CHAP. I.

*His Birth, Parentage, early Piety, and Education at School.*

**PHILIP HENRY** was born at Whitehall, in Westminster, on Wednesday, August 24, 1631, being Bartholomew-Day. I find usually in his diary some pious remark upon the annual return of his birth-day. One year he notes, that the Scripture mentions but two who observed their birth-day with feasting and joy, and they were neither of them copies to be written after: namely, Pharaoh (Gen. xl. 20.) and Herod, (Matt. xiv. 6.) "But (says he) I rather observe it as a day of mourning and humiliation, because shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin." When he had completed the thirtieth year of his age, he noted this, "So old and no older Alexander was when he had conquered the great world, but I have not yet subdued the little world, myself." At his thirty-third year he has this humble reflection, "A long time lived to small purpose, what shall I do to redeem it?" At another, "I may mourn as Caesar did, when he reflected upon Alexander's early achievements, that others younger than I am have done much more than I have done for God, the God of my life." And (to mention no more) when he had lived forty-two years he thus writes: "I would be loth to live it over again, lest, instead of making it better, I should make it worse; and besides, every year and day spent on earth is lost in heaven." This last note reminds me of a

passage I have heard him relate of a friend of his, who, being asked how old he was, answered, "On the wrong side of fifty:" which (said Mr. Henry) "he should not have said;" for, if he was going to heaven, it was "the right side of fifty."

He always kept a will by him, and it was his custom yearly, upon the return of his birth-day, to review, and (if occasion were) to renew and alter it; for it is good to do that at a set time, which it is very good to do at some time. The last will he made bears date, "This 24th day of August, 1695, being the day of the year on which I was born, 1631, and also the day of the year on which by law I died, as did also near two thousand faithful ministers of Jesus Christ, 1662;" alluding to that clause in the Act of Uniformity, which disposed of the places and benefices of ministers not conforming, "as if they were naturally dead."

His father's name was John Henry, the son of Henry Williams, of Briton's Ferry, betwixt Neath and Swansea, in Glamorganshire. According to the old Welsh custom, the father's christian name was the son's surname. He had left his native country very young, unprovided for by his relations; but it pleased God to bless his ingenuity and industry with a considerable income afterwards, which enabled him to live comfortably, to bring up his children well, and to be kind to many of his relations; but public events making against him at his latter end, when he died he left little for his children, but God graciously took care of them. Providence brought this Mr. John Henry when he was young, to be the earl of Pembroke's gentleman, whom he served many years: the earl coming to be lord-chamberlain, preferred him to be the king's servant. He was first made keeper of the Orchard at Whitehall, and afterwards page of the Back Stairs to the King's second son, James, duke of York, which place obliged him to a personal attendance upon the duke in his chamber. He lived

and died a courtier; a hearty mourner for his royal master king Charles the first, whom he did not long survive. He continued, during all the war-time, in his house at Whitehall, though the profits of his place ceased. The king, passing by his door, under a guard, when he was going to Westminster, to that which was called his trial, enquired for his old servant, Mr. John Henry, who was ready to pay his due respects to him, and prayed God to bless his majesty, and to deliver him out of the hands of his enemies, for which the guard had like to have been rough upon him.

His mother was Mrs. Magdalen Rochdale, of the parish of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, in Westminster. She was a virtuous, pious gentlewoman, one that feared God above many. She was altogether dead to the vanities and pleasures of the court, though she lived in the midst of them. She looked well to the ways of her household; prayed with them daily, catechized her children, and taught them the good knowledge of the Lord betimes. He often mentioned, with thankfulness to God, his great happiness in having such a mother, who was to him as Lois and Eunice were to Timothy, acquainting him with the Scriptures from his childhood. As there appeared in him early inclinations both to learning and piety, she devoted him in his tender years to the service of God, in the work of the ministry. She died of a consumption, March 6, 1643, leaving behind her only this son and five daughters. A little before she died, she had this saying, "My head is in heaven, and my heart is in heaven; it is but one step more, and I shall be there too."

Prince Charles and the duke of York being nearly of his age, he was in his childhood an attendant upon them in their play; they were often with him at his father's house, and were wont to tell him what preferment he should have at court, as soon as he was fit for it. He kept a book to his dying day, which the

duke of York gave him; and I have heard him regret the loss of two curious pictures, which he gave him likewise. Archbishop Laud took a particular kindness to him when he was a child, because he would be very officious to attend at the Water-gate (which was part of his father's charge in Whitehall) to let the archbishop through, when he came late from council, to cross the water to Lambeth.

These circumstances of his childhood he would sometimes speak of among his friends, not as glorying in them, but taking occasion from thence to bless God for his deliverance from the snares of the court; in the midst of which it is so very hard to maintain a good conscience and the power of religion. The breaking up and scattering of the court, by the calamities of 1641, as it dashed the expectations of his court-preferments, so it prevented the danger of court-entanglements: and though it was not, like Moses', a choice of his own, when come to years, to quit the court; yet, when he was come to years, he always expressed great satisfaction in his removal from it, and blessed God who chose his inheritance so much better for him.

Yet it may not be improper to observe here what was obvious, as well as amiable, to all who conversed with him; namely, that he had the most sweet and obliging air of courtesy and civility that could be; which some attributed, in part, to his early education at court. His mien and carriage were always so very decent and respectful, that it could not but win the hearts of all he had to do with. Never was any man further from rudeness and moroseness, which some scholars, and too many that profess religion, either wilfully affect, or carelessly allow themselves in, sometimes to the reproach of their profession. It is one of the laws of our holy religion, exemplified in the conversation of this good man, to honour all men. Sanctified civility is a great ornament to christianity.

It was a saying he often used, "Religion does not destroy good manners;" and yet he was very far from any thing of vanity in apparel, or formality of compliment in address; his conversation was all natural and easy to himself and others; and nothing appeared in him which a severe critic could call affected. This temper of his tended very much to the adorning of the doctrine of God our Saviour; and the general transcript of such an excellent copy, would do much towards the healing of those wounds, which religion has received in the house of her friends by the contrary.—But to return to his story.

The first Latin school he went to was at St. Martin's Church, under the teaching of Mr. Bonner. Afterwards he was removed to Battersea, where Mr. Wells was his school-fellow. The grateful mention which, in some of his papers, he makes of those who were the guides and instructors of his childhood and youth, brings to mind a French proverb to this purpose, "To father, teacher, and God all-sufficient, none can render equivalent."

In the year 1643, when he was about twelve years old, he was admitted into Westminster school, in the form under Mr. Thomas Vincent, then usher, of whom he would often speak, as a most able, diligent school-master; and one who grieved so much at the dulness and non-proficiency of any of his scholars, that, falling into a consumption, I have heard Mr. Henry say of him, that he even, "killed himself with false Latin."

Awile after he was taken into the upper school, under Mr. Richard (afterwards Dr.) Busby. In October, 1645, he was admitted king's scholar, and was first of the election, partly by his own merit, and partly by the interest of the earl of Pembroke.

Here he profited greatly in school-learning, and all his days retained his improvements therein to admiration. When he was in years, he would readily

quote passages out of the classic authors that were not common ; yet he rarely used any such things in his preaching, though sometimes (if very apposite) he inserted them in his notes. Here and before, his usual recreation at vacant times, was either reading the printed accounts of public occurrences, or attending the courts at Westminster-hall, to hear the trials and arguments there, which I have heard him say, he has often done to the loss of his dinner, and oftener of his play.

But let us speak of better things ; soon after the civil war began, there was a daily morning-lecture set up at the Abbey-church, between six and eight o'clock, and preached by seven members of the assembly of divines, in course : Mr. Marshal, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Herle, Dr. Staunton, Mr. Nye, Mr. Whitaker. and Mr. Hill. It was the request of his pious mother, to Mr. Busby, that he would give her son leave to attend that lecture daily, which he did, not abating any thing of his school exercise, in which he kept pace with the rest ; but only dispensing with his absence for that hour : and the Lord was pleased to make good impressions on his soul, by the sermons he heard there. His mother, also, took him with her every Thursday to Mr. Case's lecture at St. Martin's. On the Lord's day he sat under the powerful ministry of Mr. Stephen Marshal, in the morning at the New Chapel, in the afternoon at St. Margaret's Westminster, which was their parish-church. This minister, and ministry, he would to the last, speak of with great respect, and thankfulness to God, as that by which he was, through grace, in the beginning of his days, begotten again to a lively hope. I have heard him speak of it, as the saying of some wise men at that time, That if all the presbyterians had been like Mr. Stephen Marshal, and all the independents like Mr. Jeremiah Burroughs, and all the episcopalians like archbishop Usher, the breaches of the church would soon have been healed

He also attended constantly upon the monthly fasts at St. Margaret's, where the best and ablest ministers of England preached before the house of commons; and the service of the day was carried on with great strictness and solemnity, from eight in the morning till four in the evening. It was his constant practice, from eleven or twelve years old, to write, as he could, all the sermons he heard, which he kept very carefully, and transcribed many of them.

At these monthly fasts, as he himself has recorded, he had often sweet meltings of soul in prayer, and confession of sin; many lively truths came home to his heart, and he daily increased in that wisdom and knowledge which is to salvation. Read his reflections upon this, which he wrote many years after: "If ever any child, such as I then was, between the tenth and fifteenth year of my age, enjoyed line upon line, precept upon precept, I did. And was it in vain? I trust not altogether in vain. My soul rejoiceth and is glad at the remembrance of it. The word distilled as the dew, and dropt as the rain. I loved it, and loved the messengers of it;\*their very feet were beautiful to me. And, Lord, what a mercy was it, that at a time when the poor country parts were laid waste, when the noise of drums and trumpets, and the clattering of arms was heard there, and the ways to Sion mourned, that then my lot should be where there was peace and quietness, and great plenty of gospel opportunities! Bless the Lord, O my soul. As long as I live, I will bless the Lord: I will praise my God while I have my being. Had it been only the restraint that it laid upon me, whereby I was kept from the common sins of other children and youth, such as cursing and swearing, sabbath-breaking and the like, I were bound to be very thankful: but that it prevailed through grace effectually to bring me to God, how much am I indebted, and what shall I render!"



Thus the dews of heaven softened his heart by degrees. From these early experiences of his own—

1. He would blame those who laid so much stress on people's knowing the exact time of their conversion, which he thought was with many not possible to do. Who can so soon be aware of the day-break, or of the springing up of the seed sown? The work of grace is better known in its effects than in its causes. He would sometimes illustrate this by that saying of the blind man to the Pharisees, who were so critical in examining the recovery of his sight: this and the other I know not concerning it, but "This one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see," (John ix. 25.)

2. He would bear his testimony to the comfort and benefit of early piety, and recommend it to all young people as a good thing to bear the yoke of the Lord Jesus in youth. He observed concerning Obadiah, (and he was a courtier) that he "feared the Lord from his youth," (1 Kings xviii. 12;) and, it is said of him, ver. 3, that he "feared the Lord greatly." Those that would come to fear God greatly, must learn to fear him from their youth. No man did his duty so naturally as Timothy did (Phil. ii. 20), who from a child knew the Holy Scriptures. In dealing with young people, how earnestly would he press this upon them, "I tell you, you cannot begin too soon to be religious, but you may put it off too long." Manna must be gathered early; and He that is the first must have the first. He often inculcated (Eccl. xii. 1,) "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth,"—in the original, "of thy choice," thy choosing days.

I remember a passage of his in a lecture-sermon, in the year 1674, which much affected many; he was preaching on that text, (Matt. xi. 30,) "My yoke is easy;" and, after many things insisted upon, to prove the yoke of Christ easy, he at last appealed to the experience of all that had drawn in that yoke. "Call

now, if there be any that will answer you, and to which of the saints will you turn? turn to which you will, and they will all agree that they have found wisdom's ways pleasantness, and Christ's commandments not grievous. I will here witness for one, who through grace has, in some poor measure, been drawing in this yoke now above thirty years; and has found it an easy yoke, and likes the choice too well to change."

3. He would also recommend it to the care of parents, to bring their children betimes to public ordinances. He would say, "That they are capable, sooner than we are aware, of receiving good by them." The scripture takes notice, more than once, of the little ones in the solemn assemblies of the faithful, (Deut. xxix. 11; Ezra x. 1; Acts xxi. 5.)

But it is time to return to Westminster-school, where, having begun to learn Christ, we left him in the successful pursuit of other learning, under the eye and care of that great master, Dr. Busby, who, on account of his parts and diligence, took a particular kindness to him, called him his child, and would sometimes tell him he should be his heir; and there was no love lost between them. Dr. Busby was noted for being a very severe schoolmaster, especially in the beginning of his time. But Mr. Henry would say, sometimes, that in so great a school there was need of strict discipline; so, for his own part, of the four years he was in the school, he never felt the weight of his hand but once, and then (he says in some of the remarks of his youth, which he wrote long after), "I deserved it: for being monitor of the chamber, and according to the duty of this place, being sent to seek a truant, I found him, and, at his earnest request, I promised to say I could not find him, which I wickedly did." Next morning the truant coming under examination, was asked whether he saw the monitor, and he said "Yes, I did," at which Dr. Busby was much surprised, and turned his eyes upon the monitor,

with this word, "What thou, my son!" gave him correction, and appointed him to make a penitential copy of Latin verses; which when he brought, he gave him sixpence, and received him into his favor again.

Among the mercies of God in his youth, he has recorded a remarkable deliverance he had at Westminster-school, which was this: it was customary among the studious boys, for one, two, or more, to sit up the former part of the night at study, and when they went to bed about mid-night to call others at two or three o'clock, as they desired. His request was to be called at twelve, and being awaked, he desired his candle might be lighted, which stuck to the bed's head; but he fell asleep again, the candle fell, and burnt part of the bed and bolster before he awoke; but through God's good providence seasonable help came in, the fire was quenched, and he received no harm.

When he was at Westminster-school he was employed by Dr. Busby, as some others of the most ingenious and industrious of his scholars were, in reading Greek authors, to collect, by his direction, some materials for that excellent Greek grammar which he afterwards published.

But be the school ever so agreeable, youth is desirous to commence man by a removal from it. This step he took in the sixteenth year of his age. It was the ancient custom of Westminster-school, that all the king's scholars, who had candidates for an election to the University, were to receive the Lord's supper the Easter before, which he did with the rest, in St. Margaret's Church at Easter, 1647. He would often speak of the great pains which Dr. Busby took with his scholars; that were to approach that solemn ordinance, for several weeks before, at stated times; with what skill and seriousness of application, and manifest concern for their souls, he opened to them the nature of the ordinance, and the work they had to do in it, and instructed them what was to be done

in preparation for it; this he made a business of, appointing them religious exercises, instead of their school exercises. What success this had through the grace of God upon young Mr. Henry, for whom the Doctor had a particular regard; read from his own hand. 'There had been treaties (says he) before, between my soul and Jesus Christ, with some weak overtures towards him; but then, then I think it was the match was made, the knot tied. Then I set myself in the strength of divine grace, about the work of self-examination, in order to repentance; and then I repented,—that is solemnly and seriously, with some poor meltings of soul, I confessed my sins before God, original and actual, judging and condemning myself for them, and casting away from me all my transgressions, receiving Christ Jesus the Lord, as the Lord my righteousness, and devoting and dedicating my whole self absolutely and unreservedly to his fear and service. After which, coming to the ordinance, there, there I received him indeed, and he became mine; I say mine. Bless the Lord, O my soul! Encouraged by this experience, I have myself (says he in one of his papers) taken like pains with divers others at their first admission to the Lord's table, and have through grace seen the comfortable fruits of it, both in my own children and others; to be glory!'

He makes a very grateful mention of Dr. Busby's agency under God in this blessed work, in divers of his papers: "God recompense it," says he, "a thousand-fold in his bosom!"

Thus, before his launching out into the world, was this great concern happily settled, which through grace he had, all his days, more or less the comfort of, in an even serenity of mind, and a peaceful expectation of the glory to be revealed.

May 17, 1647, he was chosen from Westminster-school to Christ's Church College, in Oxford.

## CHAP: II.

*His years spent at Oxford.*

THOUGH Philip Henry<sup>c</sup> was chosen to the University in May, yet being then young, under sixteen, and in love with his school-learning, he made no great haste thither. It was in December following, 1647, that he removed to Oxford. Some merciful providences in his journey, he being a young traveller, affected him much; and he used to speak of God's goodness to him in them, according to the impressions then made by them. He has recorded them with this thankful note, "That there may be a great mercy in a small matter;" as the care that was taken of him by strangers, when he fainted and was sick in his inn the first night; and his casual meeting with Mr. Annesley, son to the Viscount Valentia, (who was chosen from Westminster-school, at the same time,) when his other company, going another way, had left him alone, and utterly at a loss what to do. Thus the sensible remembrance of old mercies may answer the intention of new ones, which is to engage our obedience to God, and to encourage our dependance on him.

Being come to Oxford, he was immediately entered commoner of Christ's Church, where Dr. Samuel Fell was then dean; the tutor assigned to him and the rest of that election, was Mr. Underwood, a very learned ingenious gentleman.

His godfather, the Earl of Pembroke had given him ten pounds to buy a gown, to pay his fees, and to set out with. This in his papers he puts a mark upon, as a seasonable mercy on account of some straits, which providence, by the calamity of the times, had brought his father into. God had taught him from his youth that excellent principle, which he adhered to all his days, that "Every creature is that to us, which God

makes it to be, and no more;" and therefore, while many seek the ruler's favour, and so expect to make their fortunes, as they call it, seeing "Every man's judgment proceedeth from the Lord," it is our wisdom to seek His favour, who is the Ruler of rulers, and that is an effectual way to make sure our happiness.

To the proper studies of this place he now vigorously addressed himself; but still retained a great kindness for the classic authors, and the exercises he loved so well at Westminster-school.

He was admitted student of Christ's Church, March 24, 1647-8, by Dr. Henry Hammond, that great man, the sub-dean, who called him his godbrother, the Earl of Pembroke being his godfather also, and Prince Henry, the other, who gave him his name.

The visitation of the university by the parliamentary Commissioners, happened to be the next month. Oxford had been for a good while in the hands of the parliament, and no change made; but now the Earl of Pembroke, and several others thereunto appointed, went thither to settle things upon a new foundation. The account Mr. Henry in his papers gives of this affair, is to this purpose. The sole questions which the visitors proposed to each person, in every college, that had any place of profit, was this, "Will you submit to the power of the parliament in this present visitation?" which all were to answer in writing; and accordingly were either displaced or continued. Some cheerfully complied, others absolutely refused, among whom he would sometimes tell of one that was but of his standing, who gave in this bold answer; "I neither can nor will submit to the power of the parliament in this present visitation; I say I cannot; I say I will not, J. C." Others answered doubtfully, pleading youth and ignorance in such matters. Mr. Henry's answer was, "I submit to the power of the parliament in the present visitation, as far as I may with a safe conscience and without perjury." His reason for the last

salvo was, because he had taken the oath of allegiance and supremacy a little before, at his admission; which he was very jealous of doing any thing to contradict or infringe, according to the character of the good man, that "he fears an oath:" this made him sometimes signify a dislike of that practice of administering oaths to such as were scarcely past children, who could hardly be supposed to take them with judgment, as oaths should be taken. However this answer of his satisfied; and by the favour of the Earl of Pembroke he was continued in his student's place. But great alterations were made in that as in other colleges, very much, undoubtedly, to the hindrance and discouragement of the scholars, who came thither to get learning, not to judge of the rights of government. Dr. Samuel Fell, the dean, was removed, and Dr. Edward Reynolds, afterwards Bishop of Norwich, was put in his room; Dr. Hammond and all the canons, except Dr. Wall, were displaced; and Mr. Wilkinson, Mr. Pocock, and others of the parliament's friends, were preferred to their places. His thoughts of this in the reflection long after were, that milder methods might have done better, and would have been a firmer establishment to the new interest; but considering that many of those who were put out, being in expectation of a sudden change, which came not of many years after, were exasperating in their carriage towards the visitors, and that the parliament, who at this time were masters, had many of their own friends ready for university preferments, which, as Oxford had been from the beginning, a garrison for the king, they had long been kept out of, it was not strange if they took such strict methods. And yet, nothing being required but a bare submission, which might be interpreted but as crying quarter, he thought that it could not be said, the terms were hard: especially, says he, if compared with those of another nature imposed since.

Among other student-masters removed, his tutor, Mr. Underwood, was one, which he often bewailed as a loss to himself; for he was a good scholar, and one that made it his business to look after his pupils, who were very likely, by the blessing of God, to have profited under his conduct; but upon the removal of Mr. Underwood, he, with some others, were turned over to Mr. Finmore, who was then in the interest which was uppermost, and was afterwards prebendary of Chester; a person, as he notes, able enough, but not willing to employ his abilities for the good of those that were committed to his charge; towards whom he had little more than the name of a tutor. But it pleased God to give him an interest in the affections of a young man, an under-graduate then, and but two or three years his senior, from Westminster, one Mr. Richard Bryan, who took him to be his chamber-fellow, while he continued at Oxford, read to him, and directed him in his studies. Of this gentleman he makes very honourable mention, as one who was, through God's blessing, an instrument of much good to him. Mr. John Fell, also, the dean's son, afterwards himself Dean of Christ Church, and Bishop of Oxford, taking pity on him, and some others that were neglected, voluntarily read to them for some time; a kindness of which he retained a very grateful sense, and for which he much honoured that learned and worthy person.

Here he duly performed the college exercises, disputations every day, in term-time; themes and verses once a week, and declamations when it came to his turn; in which performances he frequently came off with great applause: and many of his manuscripts which remain, shew how well he improved his time there.

And yet in some reflections I find under his hand, written long after, wherein he looks back upon his



early days, he charges it upon himself, that for a good while after he came to the University, though he was known not to be inferior to any of his standing in public exercises, yet he was too much a stranger to that hard study which afterwards he became acquainted with; and that he lost a deal of time which might have been better improved. Thus he is pleased to accuse himself of that, which no one else did, or could accuse him of. But the truth is, in all the secret accounts he kept of himself, he appears to have had a very quick and deep sense of his own failings and infirmities, in the most minute instances; the loss of time; weakness and distraction in holy duties; not improving opportunities of doing good to others, and the like; lamentably bewailing these imperfections, and charging them upon himself, with as great expressions of shame and sorrow, and self-abhorrence, and crying out as earnestly for pardon and forgiveness in the blood of Jesus, as if he had been the greatest of sinners. For though he was a man that walked very closely, yet withal he walked very humbly with God, and lived a life of repentance and self-denial. This reminds me of a sermon of his, which one might discern came from the heart, on that Scripture, (Rom. vii. 24.) "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "A strange complaint, (says he,) to come from the mouth of one who had learned in every state to be content. Had I been to have given my thoughts, concerning Paul, I should have said, O blessed man that thou art, who hast been in the third heaven, a great apostle, a spiritual father to thousands, &c. and yet a wretched man all this while, in his own account and esteem. He never complains thus of the bonds and afflictions that did abide him, the prisons that were frequent, the stripes above measure, but the body of death, that is, the body of sin, that was what he groaned under." How

feelingly did he observe from thence, "That the remains of indwelling corruption are a very grievous burden to a gracious soul!"

But to return, it may not be amiss to set down the causes to which he ascribes his loss of time when he came first to the University. One was, that he was young, too young, and understood not the value of his opportunities, which made him advise his friends not to send their children too soon from school to the University, though they may seem ripe, in respect of learning, till they have discretion to manage themselves: while they are children, what can be expected but that they should mind childish things? Another was, that coming from Westminster-school, his attainments in school-learning were beyond what others generally had who came from other schools; so that he was tempted to think there was no need for him to study much, because it was so easy to him to keep pace with others; which, he said, Dr. Caldecotte, chaplain to the Earl of Pembroke, and his great friend, warned him of at his coming to Oxford. Another was, that there were two sorts of persons his contemporaries, some of the new stamp, that came in by the visitation, and were divers of them serious pious young men, but of small ability, comparatively, for learning; and for that reason he desired not to have much fellowship with them. But there were others of the old spirit and way, enemies to the parliament, and the reformation they made; and these were better scholars, but generally not better men. With them for awhile, he conversed most because of their learning: but he soon found it a snare to him, and that it took him off from the life of religion. But "for ever praised be the riches of God's free grace," says he, "that he was pleased still to keep his hold of me; and not to let me alone when I was running from him, but set his hand the second time, as the expression is, (Isa. xi. 11.) to snatch me "as a brand out of the fire." His recovery

from this snare he would call a kind of second conversion; so much was he affected with the preventing grace of God in it, and sensible of a double bond to be for ever thankful, as well as of an engagement to be watchful and humble.

At the latter end of the year 1648, he had leave given him to visit his father at Whitehall, with whom he stayed some time; there he was January 30th, 1648-9, when king Charles I. was beheaded, and with a very sad heart he saw that tragical blow given. Two things he observed and used to speak of, which, I know not whether any of the historians mention: one was, that when the blow was given, there was such a dismal groan among the thousands of people that were within sight of it, as he never heard before; and desired he might never hear the like again, nor see such a cause for it. The other was, that immediately after the stroke was struck, there was, according to order, one troop of soldiers marching from Charing-cross towards King-street, and another from King-street towards Charing-cross, purposely to disperse and scatter the people, and to divert the dismal thoughts which they could not but be filled with, by driving them to shift every one for his own safety. He did upon occasion testify his dislike of this unparalleled action, which he always said was a thing that could not be justified. For some years after King Charles II. came in, Philip Henry observed the day of humiliation for this sin, desiring that God would not lay the guilt of blood to the charge of the nation: but afterwards, finding to what purposes it was generally observed and improved, even to the reproaching and condemning, not only the innocent, but some of the excellent ones of the land; and noting that there is no precedent in Scripture of keeping annual days of humiliation for particular sins; especially after the immediate judgment is at an end, he took no further notice of it. But in his diary, he adds this tender remark, according to the spirit he

was of, "Yet good men no doubt may observe it to the Lord." (Rom. xiv. 6.) Thus he judged not, and why then should he be judged?

In the year 1650-1, he took his Bachelor of Arts degree, and he has recorded the goodness of God in raising him up friends, who helped him in the expenses. Such kindnesses have a peculiar sweetness in them to a good man, who sees and receives them as the kindness of God, and the tokens of his love.

He would often mention, with thankfulness to God, the great advantages he had in the University, not only for learning, but for religion and piety. Serious godliness was in reputation; and besides the public opportunities they had, there were many of the scholars who used to meet together for prayer, and christian conference, to the great confirming of one another's hearts, in the fear and love of God, and preparing them for the service of the church. I have heard him speak of the prudent method they took then about the University Sermons on the Lord's day in the afternoon: they used to be preached by the fellows of colleges in their course; but that being found not so much for edification, Dr. Owen, and Dr. Goodwin performed that service alternately, and the young Masters of Arts that were wont to preach them, had a lecture on Tuesday appointed them. The sermons he heard at Oxford he commonly wrote, not in the time of hearing, but when he came home, in his reflection upon them, which he found a good help to his memory.

In December 1652, he proceeded Master of Arts, and in January following preached his first sermon at South Hinksey, near Oxford, on John viii. 34. "Who-soever committeth sin, is the servant of sin." On this occasion he writes in his diary, what was the breathing in his heart towards God, "The Lord make use of me as an instrument of his glory, and his churches' good in this high and holy calling."

. His great pains and improvement, notwithstanding

his extraordinary modesty and humility, had made him so well known in the University, that at the following act in July 1653, he was chosen out of all the masters of that year, to several honorable literary engagements.

Dr. Owen, who was then Vice-Chancellor, spoke with great commendation of his performances to some in the University afterwards, who only knew him by report: and I have heard a worthy divine, who was somewhat his junior in the University, and there a stranger to him, say, how much he admired these exercises, and loved him for them; and yet how much more he wondered, when he became acquainted with him in the country, that so polite an orator should become so profitable and powerful a preacher, and so readily lay aside the enticing words of man's wisdom, which were so easy to him.

There is a copy of Latin verses of his in print, among the poems which the University of Oxford published upon the peace concluded with Holland, in the year 1654, which shew him to be no less a poet than an orator.

He has noted it of some pious young men, that before they removed from the University into the country, they kept a day of fasting and humiliation for the sins they had been guilty of in that place and state. And in the visits he made afterwards to the University, he inserts into his book, as no doubt God did into his, "a tear dropt over my University sins."

### CHAP. III.

*His removal to Wrothambury, in Flintshire; his ordination to the ministry, and his exercise of it there.*

WROTHAMBURY is a little town on the river Dee, in that hundred of Flintshire which is separated some

miles from the rest of the county, and known by the name of the English Mailors; because though it is reputed to be in Wales, as pertaining to Flintshire, yet in language and customs it is wholly English, and lies mostly between Cheshire and Shropshire. Worthenbury was of old a parochial chapel belonging to the rectory of Bangor, but was separated from it in the year 1658 by the trustees for uniting and dividing of parishes, and was made a parish of itself. But what was then done being vacated at the Restoration, it came to be again an appurtenant to Bangor, till in the second year of the reign of King William and Queen Mary, it was by act of parliament separated, and made independent of Bangor.

The principal family in Worthenbury parish was that of the Pulestons of Emeral. The head of the family then was John Puleston, Serjeant-at-law, one of the Judges of the Common Pleas. To this family Mr. Henry came from Christ's Church, presently after he had completed his Master's degree, in 1653; ordered into that remote, and to him unknown, corner of the country, by that over-ruling providence which determineth "the bounds of our habitation." The Judge's lady was a person of more than ordinary parts and wisdom, in piety inferior to few, but in learning superior to most of her sex, which I could give instances of from what I find among Mr. Henry's papers, particularly an elegy she made upon the death of the learned Mr. John Selden, who was her great friend. Her agency brought Mr. Henry into the county. She wrote to a friend of hers, Mr. Francis Palmer, student of Christ's Church, to desire him to recommend to her a young man to be in her family, and to take the oversight of her sons, some of whom were ready for the University, and to preach at Worthenbury on the Lord's days, for which a very honourable encouragement was promised. Mr. Palmer proposed it to his friend Mr. Henry, who was willing

for one half year to undertake it, provided it might be required of him to preach but once on the Lord's day, and that some other supply might be got for the other part of the day; he being but twenty-two years of age, and newly entered upon that great work. Provided also, that he should be engaged for half a year only, not intending so soon to break off from an academical life, in which he so much delighted. But, preferring usefulness before his own private satisfaction, he was willing to make trial for a while, in the country; as one that sought not his own things, but the things of Jesus Christ, to whose service in the work of the ministry he had entirely devoted himself, bending his studies wholly that way. In the latter part of his time at Oxford, as one grown weary of that which, he used to say, he found little to his purpose, he employed his time mostly in searching the Scriptures, and collecting useful Scripture observations, which he made very familiar to him, and with which he was thoroughly furnished for this good work. He got a bible interleaved, in which he wrote short notes upon texts of Scripture as they occurred. He would often say, "I read other books, that I may be the better able to understand the Scripture." It was a stock of Scripture knowledge that he set up with, and with that he traded to good advantage. Though he was so great a master in the eloquence of Cicero, yet he preferred far before it that of Apollos, who was "an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures." Acts xviii. 24.

He bid very fair at that time for University preferment; such was the reputation he had gained at the late act, and such his interest with Dr. Owen: but his heart was upon the salvation of souls, to which he postponed all his other interests.

In September 1653 he came down to Emeral, from whence a messenger was sent to Oxford to conduct him thither. Long after when it had pleased God to

settle him in that country, and to build him up into a family, he would often reflect upon his coming into it first; what a stranger he then was, and how far it was from his thoughts to have made his home in those parts; and passing over a brook that divides Flintshire and Shropshire, would sometimes very affectionately use those words of Jacob, "With my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands."

At Emeral he prayed in the family, was tutor to the young gentlemen, and preached once a day at Worthenbury; other help being procured for the other part of the day, according to his request. But it soon happened, that one Lord's day the supply that was expected failed, and he was necessitated, rather than there should be a vacancy, to preach twice; in which he found the promise so well fulfilled, "as thy day is, so shall thy strength be," and "to him, that hath, (that is, who useth what he hath,) shall be given, and he shall have abundance," that, to the great satisfaction of his friends there, from thenceforward he waved looking out for other help than what came from above; and would sometimes speak of this as an instance, "that we do not know what we can do till we have tried."

Here he applied himself to a plain and practical way of preaching, as one truly concerned for the souls of his hearers. He would say sometimes, "We study how to speak, that you may understand us. And I never think I can speak plain enough, when I am speaking about souls and their salvation." I have heard him say, he thought it did him good, that for the first half year of his being at Worthenbury, he had few books with him, which engaged him to a closer search of the Scripture and his own heart in studying sermons. What success his labours had in that parish, which, before he came to it, was accounted one of the most loose profane places in all



that country, may be gathered from part of a letter of Lady Puleston to him, at the end of the first half year after his coming to Eméral, when he was uncertain of his continuance there, and inclined to return to settle at Christ's Church.

“DEAR MR. HENRY,

“The indisposition that my sadness hath bred, and the stay of Mrs. V. here yesterday hindered my answering your last expressions. As to ordering the conversation, and persevering to the practice of those good intents, taken up while one is in the pursuit of a mercy, you and I will confer, as God gives opportunity, who also must give the will and the deed by his Spirit and by the rule of his word. As to begging that one thing for you, God forbid,” as Samuel said, “that I should cease to pray, &c.” “This I am sure, that having wanted hitherto a good minister of the word among us, I have oft, by prayer and some tears, above five years, besought God for such a one as yourself; which having obtained, I cannot yet despair, seeing he hath given us the good means, but he may also give us the good end. And this I find, that your audience is increased three for one in the parish, (though in winter, more than formerly in summer) and five for one out of other places. And I have neither heard of their being in the ale-house on the Lord's day, nor ball-playing that day, which before you came was frequent. I think I can name four or five in the parish, that of formal christians are becoming or become real: but you know all are not wrought on at first by the word. God may call them at the latter part of the day, though not in this half year. It is a good sign, that most are loth to part with you; and you have done more good in this half year than I have discerned these eighteen years: but, however, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, you have delivered your own soul. I have

prayed, and do pray, seeing God hath sent you, that you may be for his glory, and not for our condemnation."

It is easy to imagine what an encouragement this was to him, and what an inducement not to leave those, among whom God had thus owned him. However, that spring he returned to Oxford. The Lady Puleston soon after went thither, with her five sons, of whom she placed the two eldest under his charge, in the college. In the following vacation he went to London to visit his relations; and there in October he received a letter from Judge Puleston, with a very solemn and affectionate request, subscribed by the parishioners of Worthenbury, earnestly desiring his settlement among them, as their minister; which he was persuaded to comply with, having fixed to himself that good rule, in the turns of his life, "to follow providence, and not force it." So in the winter following he came down again, and settled with them. He continued in his student's place in Christ Church for two or three years, attending the service of it once a year; but disposing most of the profit of it for the use of poor scholars there.

The tithe of Worthenbury belonged to the Emerald family, paying some rent to the rector of Bangor. The tithe Judge Puleston was willing to give, clear of that charge, to the minister of Worthenbury for ever. But such was the peculiar and extraordinary kindness he had for Mr. Henry, upon the experience of his merits, that he chose rather, by deed of indenture, bearing date October 6, 1655, between himself and Mr. Henry, "In consideration of his being pleased to undertake the cure of souls, and to preach and teach, and perform other duties of divine service in the parish church of Worthenbury, (so the deed runs) to give, grant, and confirm, for himself and his heirs, unto the said Philip Henry, the yearly rent of one hundred pounds, charged upon all his messuages,

lands, and tenements, in the several counties of Flint, Denbigh, and Chester, to be paid quarterly, until such times as the said Philip Henry shall be promoted or preferred to some other spiritual or ecclesiastical living or preferment," with power of distress in case of non-payment. A hundred a year was more than Worthenbury tithes were worth at that time; and the manner of gift freed the maintenance from much of that loss and incumbrance which commonly attends the gathering of tithe.

He continued for some years in the Emeral family, where he laid out himself very much for the spiritual good of the family, even of the meanest of the servants, by catechising, repeating the sermons, and personal instruction; and he had much comfort in the countenance and conversation of the judge and his lady. Yet he complains sometimes in his diary of "the snares and temptations that he found there," especially because some of the branches of the family, who did not resemble their parents, were uneasy at his being there; which made him willing to remove to a house of his own. When Judge Puleston perceived this, in the year 1657, out of his abundant and continued kindness to him, he did at his own charge build him a very handsome house in Worthenbury, and settled it upon him by a lease, bearing date March 6, 1657, for threescore years, "if he should so long continue minister at Worthenbury, and not accept of better preferment."

He has noted in his diary, that the day the workmen began to build that house, Mr. Mainwaring, of Malpas, preached the lecture of Bangor, from Psalm cxxvii. 1, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it." "There never was truth more seasonable to any, than this was to me."—He has recorded it as his great care, that his affections might be kept loose from it, and that it might not incroach upon God's interest in his heart. When it

was finished he thus writes, "I do from my heart bless God, that no hurt or harm befel any of the workmen in the building of it." Thus was his maintenance settled at Worthenbury.

In the year 1659, he was by a writing of Judge Puleston collated, nominated, and presented to the church of Worthenbury, (and the powers that then were, having so appointed) he had an approbation thereof from the commissioners for approbation of public preachers.

Some little opposition was made to his settlement at Worthenbury by Mr. Fogg, then rector of Bangor, because he conceived it an intrenchment upon his right to Worthenbury, and thought it might prejudice his recovering it by course of law. I only mention this for the sake of the note he has upon it in his diary, which is this: "I do earnestly desire that the judge may give Mr. Fogg all reasonable satisfaction, that there may be no appearance of wrong to him, or any other, in this thing." And when Mr. Fogg insisted on it, that Mr. Henry should give it under his hand, that he desired the consent of the said Mr. Fogg to be minister of Worthenbury, he yielded to do it for peace-sake; and from thence forward there was an intimate and entire friendship between Mr. Fogg and him.

Being thus settled at Worthenbury, his next care was concerning ordination to the work of the ministry; to which he would see his call very clear, before he solemnly devoted himself to it.

Mr. Henry was very desirous of being ordained at Worthenbury, but the ministers were not willing to set such a precedent; however, that was one thing which occasioned the delay, so that he was not ordained till September 16, 1657. The manner of his ordination was according to the known directory of the assembly of divines, and the common usage of the presbyterians.

The following was the confession that he delivered :—

“The ground and rule of my faith towards God, is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament; I believe they were written by holy men, immediately inspired by the Holy Ghost; having found the efficacy of them, in some measure, upon my own heart; I believe they are further able to make me wise to salvation.

Concerning God, I believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of those that diligently seek him.

The trinity of persons in the unity of the God-head, I receive and own as a truth, I admire and adore as a mystery; though no man hath seen God at any time, yet the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him, and what he hath declared concerning him, that I believe. I believe that God is a Spirit, for the Son hath said, “God is a Spirit.” I believe that he has life in himself. I believe all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. I believe by his providence he preserves, guides, and governs all the creatures, according to the purpose of his own will, to his own glory; for the Father worketh hitherto, and the Son also worketh.

I believe he made man upright after his own image and likeness, which image consisteth in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, but man by sin lost it.

I believe we were all in the loins of our first parents, and that they stood and fell as public persons, and upon that account justly, without any colour of wrong, we bear our share, both in the guilt of their disobedience, and also the corruption of their nature following thereupon; so that we come into the world children of wrath, and heirs of the curse, one as well as another; enemies to God, hating him, and hated of him; averse to what is good, and prone to all manner of evil. Though all are born in this condition, yet there are some that do not die in it.

I believe there is a Mediator, and there is but one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. Those whom the Father hath from everlasting pitched his love upon, and given to Christ, not because of works or faith foreseen, but merely of his free grace ; for those I believe Christ was sent forth into the world, made of a woman, made under the law ; for, their sakes he sanctified himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross ; wherefore God also hath highly exalted him ; and having raised him from the dead on the third day, set him at his own right hand, where he ever lives, to make intercession for those for whom he shed his blood. All these elect redeemed ones I believe are in due time, sooner or later, in their lives effectually called, washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

I believe the righteousness of Christ alone, apprehended by faith, is the matter of our justification before God ; and that no flesh can stand in his sight upon any other terms ; for he is the Lord our righteousness, and in him only the Father is well pleased.

I believe the work of sanctification, managed by the Spirit, who dwelleth in us, though in respect of parts it be complete, for the whole man is renewed ; yet in respect of degrees it is not fully perfected till we come to glory ; and I believe all that are justified shall be glorified, for we are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation.

I believe the gathering in and building up of saints, is the special end why pastors and teachers are appointed in the church ; and that Jesus Christ, according to his promise, will be with them to the end of the world.

The Two Sacraments of the New Testament, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, I receive and own as signs and seals of the covenant of grace ; the former

instituted by our Lord Jesus, as a sign and seal of our ingrafting into him, due of right to all the infants of believing parents, and but once to be administered ; the other instituted by our Lord Jesus in the night wherein he was betrayed, to shew forth his death, and so seal the benefits purchased thereby to his church, and people, and to be often repeated.

When the body returns to the dust, I believe the soul returns to God that gave it : and that immediately it receives from him the sentence, according to what hath been done in the flesh, either "Come, inherit the kingdom prepared, or Depart accursed into everlasting fire."

I believe, besides this, a day of general judgment in the end of the world, wherein we must all appear before the tribunal of Jesus Christ ; and that our bodies being raised by an Almighty power from the dust, shall be united to the same souls again, and shall partake with them in the same condition, either of happiness or misery, to all eternity. Those that have done good shall come forth unto the resurrection of life, and those that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation.

This is the sum and substance of my faith, into which I was baptized, and in which, by the grace of God, I will live and die."

Mr. Parsons then proposed certain questions to him, according to the instructions in the Directory, to which he returned answers as follow :—

*Question 1.* "What are your ends in undertaking the work and calling of a minister?"

*Answer.* As far as upon search and enquiry I can hitherto find, though there be that within me that would seek great things for myself (if indeed they were to be found in this calling) yet with my mind I seek them not. But the improvement of the talent which I have received in the service of the gospel, for the glory of God and salvation of souls, I hope

is in my eye ; if there be any thing else, I own it not, I allow it not. While so many seek their own, it is my desire, and shall be my endeavour, to seek the things of Jesus Christ.

**Q. 2.** "What are your purposes, as to diligence and industry in this calling?"

**A.** I do purpose and resolve, by the help of God, to give myself wholly to these things ; to prayer, reading, meditation, instant preaching in season and out of season ; wherein I shall very gladly spend and be spent, if by any means I may both save myself and them that hear me. And when at any time I fail herein, I desire God by his Spirit, and my christian friends, neighbours and brethren, by seasonable reproof and admonition, to put me in mind of this engagement now made, in the presence of this great congregation.

**Q. 3.** "Do you mean to be zealous and faithful in the defence of truth and unity, against error and schism?"

**A.** I believe what the Spirit hath foretold, that in the last days, perilous times shall come wherein men will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall heap unto themselves teachers. 'Tis my resolution, by the grace of Christ, to watch in all things ; to contend earnestly for the faith ; to hold fast the form of sound and wholesome words, even the words of the Lord Jesus, and the doctrine which is according to godliness ; in meekness, as I am able, instructing those that oppose themselves : and for peace and unity, if my heart deceive me not, I shall rather choose to hazard the loss of any thing that is most dear to me, than be any way knowingly accessory to the disturbance of these in the churches of Christ?

**Q. 4.** "What is your persuasion of the truth of the reformed religion?"

**A.** My persuasion is, that the bishop of Rome is



that man of sin and son of perdition whom the Lord Jesus will consume with the spirit of his mouth, and whom he will destroy by the brightness of his coming. And the separation which our first reformers made, I do heartily rejoice in, and bless God for; for had we still continued to partake with him in his sins, we should in the end have partaken with him also in his plagues.

**Q. 5.** "What do you intend to do when the Lord shall alter your condition, and bring a family under your charge?"

**A.** When the Lord shall please in his providence to bring me into new relations, I hope he will give me grace to fill them up with duty. It is my purpose to wait upon him and to keep his way, to endeavour, in the use of means, that all that are mine may be the Lord's.

**Q. 6.** "Will you in humility and meekness submit to admonition and discipline?"

**A.** I believe it to be a duty incumbent upon all that profess the name of Christ to watch over one another, and that when any is overtaken in a fault, those that are spiritual are to set him in joint again with the spirit of meekness. It shall be my endeavour in the strength of Jesus Christ to walk without rebuke, and when at any time I step aside (for who is there that lives and sins not) I shall account the smiting of my brethren kindness, and their wounds faithful.

**Q. 7.** "What if troubles, persecutions, and discouragements arise, will you hold out to the end notwithstanding?"

**A.** Concerning this I am very jealous over my own heart, and there is cause; I find a great want of that zeal and courage for God which I know is required in a minister of the gospel; nevertheless, I persuade myself that no temptation shall befall me but such as is common to man, and that God who is faithful

will not suffer me to be tempted above that which I am able, but that with the temptation he will also make a way to escape, that I may be able to bear it. I promise faithfulness to the death ; but I rest not all in my promise to God, but in his to me ; "When thou goest through the fire, and through the water, I will be with thee."

When this was done, Mr. Parsons prayed ; and in prayer, he and the rest of the presbyters laid their hands upon him, with words to this purpose : "Whom we do thus in thy name set apart to the work and office of the ministry."

I have heard it said by those who were present at this solemnity, that Mr. Henry did in his countenance, carriage, and expression, discover such an extraordinary seriousness and gravity, and such deep impressions made upon his spirit, as greatly affected the auditory, and even struck an awe upon them.

Read the reflection upon it in his diary. "Methought I saw much of God in the carrying on of the work of this day. O how good is the Lord ! he is good and doth good ; the remembrance of it I shall never lose ; to him be glory. I made many promises of diligence, faithfulness, &c., but I lay no stress at all upon them, but on God's promise to me, that he will be with his ministers always to the end of the world. Amen, Lord, so be it. Make good thy word unto thy servant, wherein thou hast caused me to put my trust." And in another place, "I did this day receive as much honour and work, as ever I shall be able to know what to do with. Lord Jesus, proportion supplies accordingly." Two scriptures he desired might be written in his heart, 2 Cor. vi. 4, 5, &c. ; and 2 Chron. xxix. 11.

Two years after, upon an occasion of his being present at an ordination at Whitechurch, he thus writes—  
'This day my ordination covenants, were in a special

manner renewed, as to diligence in reading, prayer, meditation, faithfulness in preaching, admonition, catechising, sacraments, zeal against error and profaneness, care to preserve and promote the unity and purity of the church, notwithstanding opposition and persecution, though to death. Lord, thou hast filled my hands with work, fill my heart with wisdom and grace that I may discharge my duty to thy glory, my own salvation, and the salvation of those that hear me. Amen.'

Let us now see how he applied himself to his work at Worthenbury. The sphere was narrow, too narrow for such a burning and shining light. There were then but forty-one communicants in that parish, and they were never doubled. Yet he had such low thoughts of himself, that he neither sought for a larger sphere, nor would hearken to any overtures of that kind: and withal, he had such high thoughts of his work, and the worth of souls, that he exerted as much diligence and vigour here, as if he had the over-sight of the largest and most considerable parish in the country.

The greatest part of the parish were poor tenants, and labouring husbandmen; but the souls of such, he used to say, are as precious as the souls of the rich, and to be looked after accordingly. His prayer for them was, "Lord, despise not the day of small things in this place, where there is some willingness, but much weakness." And thus he writes upon the Judge settling a handsome maintenance upon him:—"Lord, thou knowest, I seek not theirs, but them: give me the souls.—"

He was in labours more abundant to win souls; besides preaching, he expounded the scriptures in order, catechised and explained the catechism. At first he took into the number of his catechumens some that were adults, who, he found, wanted instruction; and when he had taken what pains he thought needful with them, he dismissed them from further attendance,

with commendation of their proficiency, and counsel to hold fast the form of sound words ; and to be watchful against the sins of their age, to apply themselves to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and make ready for it ; afterward he catechised none above seventeen or eighteen years of age. •

He set up a monthly lecture there of two sermons, one he himself preached, and the other his friend Mr. Ambrose Lewis, of Wrexham, for some years. He also kept up a monthly conference in private from house to house, in which he met with the more judicious persons of the parish, and they discoursed familiarly together of the things of God, to their mutual edification, according to the example of the apostles, who, though they had the liberty of public places, yet taught also from house to house, (Acts v. 42 ; xx. 20.) That which induced him to set and keep up this exercise as long as he durst (which was till August 1660) was, that by this means he came better to understand the nature of his flock, and so knew better how to preach to them, and to pray for them, and they to pray one for another. If they were in doubt about any thing relating to their souls, that was an opportunity of getting satisfaction. It was likewise a means of increasing knowledge and love and other graces ; and thus it abounded to a good account.

He was very industrious in visiting the sick, instructing them, and praying with them ; and in this, he would say, he aimed to do good, not only to the sick, but also to their friends and relations that were about them.

He preached funeral sermons for all that were buried there, rich or poor, old or young, or little children ; for he looked upon it as an opportunity of doing good. He called it, " setting-in the plough of the word, when the providence had prepared and softened the ground." He never took any money for that or any other ministerial performance, besides his

stated salary, for which he thought himself obliged to do his whole duty to them as a minister.

When he first administered the ordinance of the Lord's Supper there, he did it with great solemnity. After he had endeavoured, in his public preaching, to instruct them in the nature of that ordinance, he discoursed personally with all that gave up their names to the Lord in it, concerning their knowledge, experience, and conversation, their obligation to observe the law of Christ, and concerning brotherly admonition in case of scandal; and gave notice to the congregation who they were that were admitted; adding this, 'Concerning these, and myself, I have two things to say, 1st. As to what is past we have sinned: if we should say we have not, we should deceive ourselves, and the truth were not in us; and yet this withal we can say, and have said it, some of us with tears, We have grieved that we have sinned. 2dly, For the time to come we are resolved, by God's grace, to walk in new obedience; and yet seeing we are not angels, but men and women encompassed with infirmities and temptations, it is possible we may fall; but if we do, it is our declared resolution to submit to admonition and censure, according to the rule of the gospel.' He took care so to manage the admissions to that ordinance, that the weak might not be discouraged, nor the ordinance profaned. He would tell those whom he was necessitated to debar from the ordinance for ignorance, that if they were but truly willing, they might in a short time, by the blessing of God upon their diligent use of means, reading, prayer, and conference, get such a competent measure of knowledge, as to be able to discern the Lord's body. And those that had been scandalous, if they would but come and declare their repentance and resolutions of new obedience, they should be no longer excluded.

To give a specimen of his lively administrations of

that ordinance, let me transcribe the notes of his exhortation at the first sacrament that he ever administered, Nov. 27, 1659. I suppose they are but hints of what he enlarged more upon, for he had always a great fluency upon such occasions.

‘Dearly beloved in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we are met together this day about the most solemn and weighty service under heaven; we are come to a feast, where the feast-maker is God the Father; the provision, God the Son, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed; the guests, a company of poor sinners, unworthy such an honour; the crumbs under the table were too good for us, and yet we are permitted to taste the provision upon the table; and that which makes the feast is, a hearty welcome: God the Father bids you welcome, to the flesh and blood of his Son; think you hear him saying to you, O believing souls, “Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.” The end of this feast is to keep in remembrance the death of Christ, and our deliverance by it, and thereby to convey spiritual nourishment and refreshment to our souls. But withal, give me leave to ask you one question, What appetite have you for this feast? Are you come hungering and thirsting? such have a promise, “they shall be filled.” He filleth the hungry with good things, but the rich are sent empty away; a honey-comb to a full soul is no honey-comb.—Canst thou say as Christ said, “With desire I have desired to eat this?” In this ordinance here is Christ and all his benefits exhibited to thee. Art thou weak? here is bread to strengthen thee. Art thou sad? here is wine to comfort thee. What is it thou standest in need of?—a pardon? here it is sealed with blood; ‘take it by faith, as I offer it to you in the name of the Lord Jesus: “though thy sins have been as scarlet, they shall be as wool, if thou be willing and obedient.” It may be, here are some, that have been drunkards,

swearers, scoffers at godliness, sabbath-breakers, and what not? and God hath put into your hearts to humble yourselves, to mourn for, and turn from, all your abominations; O come hither, here is forgiveness for thee. What else is it thou wantest? O (says the poor soul) I would have more of the Spirit of grace, more power against sin, especially my own iniquity; why, here it is for thee: from the fulness that is in Jesus Christ we receive, and grace for grace, John i. 16. We may say as David did, (Psalm cxviii. 7, 8.) "God hath spoken in his holiness," and then "Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine." So God hath spoken in his word, sealed in his sacrament, and then Christ is mine, pardon is mine, grace is mine, comfort is mine, glory is mine; here I have his bond to shew for it. This is to those among you that have engaged their hearts to approach unto God this day.

'But if there be any come hither with a false, unbelieving, filthy, hard heart, I do warn you seriously, and with authority, in the name of Jesus Christ, presume not to come any nearer to this sacred ordinance; you that live in the practice of any sin, or the omission of any duty against your knowledge and conscience; you that have any malice or grudge to any of your neighbours, leave your gift and go your ways; be reconciled to God, be reconciled to your brother, and then come!—Better shame thyself for coming so near, then damn thyself by coming nearer. I testify to those who say they shall have peace, though they go on still in their trespasses, that there is poison in the bread; take it and eat it at your own peril; there is poison in the cup too, you drink your own damnation: I wash my hands from the guilt of your blood, look you to it. On the other hand, you poor penitent souls that are lost in yourselves, here is a Christ to save you: Come, "O come ye that are weary and heavy laden, &c."

His carriage towards the people of his parish was

very exemplary; condescending to the meanest, and conversing familiarly with them; bearing with the infirmities of the weak, and becoming all things to all men. He was exceedingly tender of giving offence, or occasion of grief to any; reminding himself in his diary upon such occasions, that the wisdom that is from above, is pure, and peaceable, and gentle, &c. Yet he plainly and faithfully reprov'd what he saw amiss in any, and would not suffer sin to pass unnoticed; mourning also for that which he could not mend. There were some untractable people in the parish, who sometimes caused grief to him, and exercised his boldness and zeal in reprov'g. Once hearing of a merry meeting at an ale-house on a Saturday night, he went himself and broke it up, and scattered them. At another time, he publicly witnessed against a frolic of some vain people, who on a Saturday night came to the church with a fiddle before them, and dress'd it up with flowers and garlands, making it (as he told them) more like a play-house: and, was this their preparation for the Lord's day, and the duties of it? &c. He remind'd them of Eccl. xi. 9. "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth: but know thou—"

Many out of the neighbouring parishes attended upon his ministry, and some came from far, though sometimes he signified his dislike of it; so far was he from glorying in it. But they who had spiritual senses exercised to discern things that differ, would attend upon that ministry, which they found to be most edifying.

He was about eight years labouring in the word and doctrine of Worthenbury, and his labour was not altogether vain: he saw in many the desire of his soul, to the rejoicing of his heart; but with this particular dispensation which I have heard him sometimes speak of, that most or all of those in that parish, whom he was, through grace, instrumental of good to, died before he left it, or quickly after: so that



within a few years after his removal, there were very few of the visible fruits of his ministry there. Yet the opportunity he found there of doing more good, by having those that were his charge near him, made him all his days bear his testimony to parish-order, where it may be had upon good terms. From his experience here, (though he would say, we must do what we can, when we cannot do what we would;) he often wished and prayed for the opening of a door, by which to return to that order again.

He had not been long at Worthenbury, when he began to be taken notice of by the neighbouring ministers, as likely to be a considerable man. Though his extraordinary modesty and humility, which even in his youth he was remarkable for, made him to sit down with silence in the lowest place, and to say as Elihu, "Days shall speak;" yet his eminent gifts and graces could not long be hid, and a person of his merits could not but meet with those quickly, who said, "Friend, go up higher;" and so that scripture was fulfilled, Luke xiv. 10. He was often called upon to preach the weekly lectures, which were set up plentifully, and diligently attended in those parts; and his labours were generally very acceptable and successful. The people gave him the title of "Heavenly Henry," by which he was commonly known all the country over. His advice was sought for by many neighbouring ministers and christians; for he was one of those that found favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man. He was noted at his first setting out, as I have been told by one who was intimately acquainted with him, and with his character and conversation, for three things: 1. Great piety and devotion, and a mighty savor of godliness in all his converse. 2. Great industry in the pursuit of useful knowledge; he was particularly observed to be very inquisitive when he was among the aged and intelligent, hearing them, and asking them questions:

a good example to young men, especially young ministers. 3. Great self-denial, self-diffidence, and self-abasement: this eminent humility put a lustre upon all his other graces. This character of him reminds me of a passage I have heard him relate, as a check to the forwardness and confidence of young men, that once, at a meeting of ministers, a question of moment was started, to be debated among them; upon the proposal of it, a confident young man shoots his bolt presently. "Truly, (said he) I hold it so."—"You hold, sir? (said a grave minister) it becomes *you* to hold your peace."

Besides his frequent preaching of the lectures about him, he was a constant and diligent attendant upon those within his reach; and not only wrote the sermons, but afterwards recorded in his diary, what in each sermon reached his heart; affected him, and did him good; adding some proper pious ejaculations, which were the breathings of his heart, when he meditated upon, and prayed over the sermons. What a wonderful degree of piety and humility doth it evidence, for one of so great acquaintance with the things of God, to write, This I learnt out of such a sermon; and this was the truth I applied to myself out of such a sermon; and indeed something out of every sermon. His diligent improvement of the word preached, contributed more than any one thing, as a means to his great attainments in knowledge and grace. He would say sometimes, that one great use of week-day lectures was, that it gave ministers an opportunity of hearing one another preach, by which they are likely to profit, which they hear not as masters, but as scholars; not as censors, but as learners.

His great friend and companion, and fellow-labourer in the work of the Lord, was the worthy Mr. R. Steel, of Hammer. With him he joined frequently at Hammer and elsewhere, in christian conference, and in days

of humiliation and prayer, besides their meetings with other ministers at public lectures ; after which it was usual to spend some time among themselves in set disputations in Latin. Thus, in those days, ministers made it their business to provoke one another to love and to good works.

In the beginning of his days he often laboured under bodily distempers ; it was feared that he was in a consumption ; some blamed him for taking so much pains about his ministerial work, and urged him to husband his strength ; but he often reflected upon it with comfort afterward, that he was not influenced by such suggestions. He would sometimes say, "The more we do, the more we MAY do in the service of God." When his work was more than ordinary, and bore hard upon him, he thus appealed to God ; "Thou knowest, Lord, how well contented I am to spend and be spent in thy service ; and if the outward man decay, O, let the inward man be renewed." Upon the return of his indisposition he expresses a great concern how to get spiritual good by it ; to come out of the furnace, and "leave some dross behind ;" for "it is a great loss to lose an affliction." He mentions it as that which he hoped did him good, that he was ready to look upon every return of distemper, "as a summons to the grave ;" thus he learned to die daily. "I find," says he, "my earthly tabernacle tottering ; and when it is taken down, I shall have a building in heaven, that shall never fail. Blessed be God the Father, and my Lord Jesus Christ, and the good Spirit of grace. Even so. Amen." This was both his strength and his song, under his bodily infirmities.

While he was at Worthenbury, he constantly laid by the tenth of his income for the poor, which he carefully and faithfully disposed of, in the liberal things which he devised, especially teaching poor children. And he recommended it as a good rule to lay *by* for charity, in proportion to the circumstances,

as it will then be easier to lay *out* in charity; we shall be more apt to seek for opportunities of doing good, when we have money lying by us, of which we have said, "This is not our own, but the poor's." To encourage himself and others to works of charity, he would say, "He is no fool,\* who parts with that which he cannot keep, when he is sure to be recompensed with that which he cannot lose." And yet to exclude all boasting of alms, he often expressed himself in those words of David, "Of thine own, Lord, have we given thee."

In the year 1658, the ministers of that neighbourhood, enlarged their correspondence with the ministers of North-Wales; and they had several meetings at Ruthin, and other places, that year, for the settling of a correspondence, and the promoting of unity, love, and good understanding among themselves, by entering into an association, like those some years before of Worcestershire and Cumberland, which, having been published, they made their pattern. They appointed particular associations; and, notwithstanding some of them were in their judgments episcopal, others congregational, and others classical, they agreed to lay aside the thoughts of matters in variance, that with one consent they might study, in their respective places, to promote the common interest of Christ's kingdom, and the common salvation of precious souls. He observed that this year, after the death of Oliver Cromwell, there was generally throughout the nation a great change in the temper of God's people, and a strong tendency towards peace and unity; as if they were by consent weary of their long clashing. In his diary he expresses his great rejoicing in this, and his hope that the time was at hand, when "Judah should no longer vex Ephraim, nor Ephraim envy Judah, neither should they learn war any more." Though these hopes were soon disappointed by a change of the scene, yet he would often

speak of the experience of that and the following year in those parts, as a specimen of what may yet be expected, and therefore in faith prayed for, when the Spirit shall be poured out upon us from on high. But alas! "Who shall live when God doth this?" From that experience he likewise gathered this observation, that "it is not so much our difference of opinion that doth us the mischief, as the mismanagement of that difference."

In the association of the ministers, it was referred to Mr. Henry to draw up that part of agreement which concerned the worship of God, which task he performed to their satisfaction. His preface to it begins thus: 'Though the main of our desires and endeavours be after unity in the greater things of God; yet we judge uniformity in the circumstances of worship, a thing not to be altogether neglected by us; not only in regard of that influence, which external visible order hath upon the beauty and comeliness of the churches of Christ; but also, as it hath a direct tendency both to strengthen our hands in ministerial services, and to remove those prejudices which many have conceived even against religion and worship itself. We bless God from our very souls, for that whereunto we have already attained; and yet we hope something further may be done, in reference to our closer walking by the same rule, and minding the same things. The word of God is the rule which we desire and resolve to walk by in the administration of ordinances; and for those things wherein the word is silent, we think we may and ought to have recourse to christian prudence, and the practice of the reformed churches, agreeing with the general rules of the word.'

These agreements of theirs were the more likely to be for good, since here, as in Worcestershire, when they were in agitation, the ministers set apart a day of fasting and prayer among themselves to bewail

ministerial neglects, and to seek of God direction and success in their ministerial work. They met sometimes for this purpose at Mr. Henry's house, at Worthenbury.

One passage may not improperly be inserted here; that once, at a meeting of the ministers, being desired to subscribe a certificate concerning one whom he had not sufficient acquaintance with, he refused; giving this reason, "that he preferred the peace of his conscience before the friendship of all the men in the world."

Sept. 29, 1658, the lady Puleston died. "She was (said he) the best friend I had on earth; but my Friend in heaven is still where he was, and he will never leave me nor forsake me." He preached her funeral sermon from Isa. ii. 22, "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils." He has noted this expression of hers not long before she died, "My soul leans to Jesus Christ; lean to me, sweet Saviour." About this time he writes, "A dark cloud is over my concerns in this family; but my desire is, that whatever becomes of me and my interest, the interest of Christ may still be kept on foot in this place. Amen, so be it." But he adds soon after, that saying of Athanasius, which he was used often to quote and take comfort from: "It is a little cloud, and will soon blow over."

About a year after, Sept. 5, 1659, Judge Puleston died, and all Mr. Henry's interest in the Emeral-family was buried in his grave. He preached the Judge's funeral sermon from Neh. xiii. 14. "Wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the officers thereof;" the design of which was not to applaud his deceased friend; I find not a word in the sermon to that purpose: but he took occasion from the instance of so great a benefactor to the ministry, as the Judge was, to shew that deeds done for the house of God and the offices thereof,

are good deeds: and to press people according to their ability and opportunity, to do such deeds. One passage in that sermon ought to be recorded; 'That it had been for several years the practice of a worthy gentleman in the neighbouring county, in renewing his leases, instead of making it a condition that his tenants should keep a hawk or a dog for him, to oblige them that they should keep a bible in their houses for themselves, and should bring up their children to learn to read and be catechised. This, said he, would be no charge to you, and it might oblige them to that, which otherwise they would neglect. "Some wished," says he in his diary, "that I had chosen some other subject for that sermon; but I approved myself to God; and if I seek to please men, I am not the servant of Christ." What personal affronts he received from some of the branches of that family at that time, need not be mentioned; but with what exemplary patience he bore them, ought not to be forgotten.

In March, 1658-9, he was very much solicited to leave Worthenbury, and accept the vicarage of Wrexham, which was a place that he had both a great interest in, and a great kindness for; but as he could not see his call clear from Worthenbury, he declined it. The same year he had an offer made him of a considerable living near London, but he did not consult with flesh and blood, nor seek great things for himself.

He was a hearty well-wisher to the return of the King, the spring following, in 1660, and much affected with the mercy of it. "While others rejoice carnally," said he, "Lord, help thy people to rejoice spiritually, in our public national mercies." It was upon that occasion that Mr. Baxter preached his sermon of "Right rejoicing," on Luke x. 20. But he and others soon saw cause to rejoice with trembling, and to sing both of mercy and judgment; for

about that time he has this melancholy remark, "Religion loses ground exceedingly, and profaneness gets it. Help, Lord!" However, he was very industrious to quiet the minds of some who were very uneasy at that great revolution; and that scripture yielded him much satisfaction, John iii. 35. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand." If Christ be not only Head of the church, but Head over all things to the church, we may be assured, that all things shall be made to work together for good to it. The text also, which the Lord put into his heart to preach upon, on the day of public thanksgiving for the king's restoration, was very comfortable to him: "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord." (Prov. xxi. 1.) His sense of that great mercy of God to the nation, in the unbloody, peaceable, and legal settlement of King Charles II. upon the throne, was the same with that of multitudes, both ministers and others who were of the quiet in the land, who yet not long after suffered very hard things under him. Soon after the return of the King, he notes, how industrious some were to remove him from Worthenbury; on which he writes this, as the breathing of his soul towards God, "Lord, if it please thee, fasten me here as a nail in a sure place; if otherwise, I will take nothing ill which thou doest with me." When pressed by his friends more earnestly than before to accept of some other place; "Lord, (said he) mine eye is up unto thee; I am wholly at thy disposal; make my way plain before my face, because of mine enemies; my resolution is, to deny myself if thou callest me. Here, or any where, 'tis no great matter where I am."

There are two things further which I think it may be of use to give some account of in the close of this chapter. 1. Of the course of his ministry at Worthenbury; and 2. Of the state of his soul, and the communion he had with God in those years.



As to the subjects he preached upon, he did not use to dwell long upon a text. He would sometimes say, "Better one sermon upon many texts, that is, many scriptures opened and applied, than many sermons upon one text."

He used to preach in a fixed method, and linked his subjects in a sort of chain. He adapted his method and style to the capacities of his hearers, fetching his similitudes for illustration, from those things which were familiar to them. He did not shoot the arrow of the word over their heads in high notions, or the flourishes of affected rhetoric; nor under their feet by blunt and homely expressions; but to their hearts in close and lively applications. His delivery was very graceful and agreeable, neither noisy and precipitate on the one hand, nor dull and slow on the other. His doctrine dropped as the dew, and distilled as the soaking rain, and came with a charming pleasing power, such as many bore witness to, that have wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.

When he went to Oxford, and preached before the university in Christ's-Church, as he did several times, his labours were very acceptable, and successful; particularly one sermon which he preached on Prov. xiv. 9. "Fools make a mock at sin;" for which, a young Master of Arts came to his chamber afterwards to return him thanks, and to acknowledge the good impressions, which divine grace, by that sermon, had made upon his soul, which he hoped he should never forget.

In his diary he frequently records the frame of his spirit in studying and preaching. Sometimes blessing God for signal help vouchsafed, and owning him the "Lord God of all his enlargements;" at other times, complaining of great deadness and straitness. "It is a wonder, (says he,) that I can speak of eternal things, with so little a sense of the reality of them. Lord,

strengthen that which remains, which is ready to die." And he once writes thus upon a studying day; "I forgot explicitly and expressly to crave help from God when I began, and the chariot-wheels drove accordingly. Lord, forgive my omissions, and keep me in the way of duty.

As to the state of his soul in these years, it should seem by his diary, that he was exercised with some doubts and fears concerning it. "I think, (says he,) never did any poor creature pass through such a mixture of hope and fear, joy and sadness, assurance and doubting, down and up, as I have done these years past." The notice of this may be of use to drooping christians, that they may know their case is not singular; and that if God, for a small moment, hide his face from them, he deals with them no otherwise than as he useth sometimes to deal with the dearest of his servants. It is affecting to hear a person that lived a life of communion with God, complaining of great straitness in prayer. He says, "No life at all in the duty; many wanderings: if my prayers were written down, and my vain thoughts interlined, what incoherent nonsense would there be! I am ashamed, Lord; I am ashamed, O pity, and pardon." He suspected the workings of pride, when he gave an account to a friend who enquired of him, concerning the success of his ministry, and he recorded it, with this ejaculation annexed, "The Lord pardon and subdue." This was a sign that he kept a very watchful eye upon the motions of his own heart.

He charges it upon himself in his diary, that he was present at a duty in the midst of many distractions, not tasting sweetness in it, &c. "When a fire is first kindled, (says he,) there is a deal of smoke and smother, that afterwards wears away; in young converts, there is much peevishness, forwardness, darkness: so it hath been with my soul, and so it is yet in a great measure. Lord, pity, and do not quench the smoking

flax; though as yet it do but smoke, let these sparks be blown up into a flame." He adds "Great mercies, but poor returns; signal opportunities, but small improvements." Such are his frequent complaints of himself. And, though few or none excelled him in profitable discourse, yet, in that, he often bewails his barrenness, and unprofitableness, saying, "Little good done or got such a day for want of a heart; 'tis my sin and my shame. O that I had wings like a dove."

Yet, when he wanted a faith of assurance, he lived by a faith of adherence. "Such a day (says he) a full resignation was made of all my concerns, into the hands of my heavenly Father; let him deal with me as seemeth good in his eyes; I am learning and labouring to live by faith; Lord, help my unbelief." Another time he notes, that many perplexing fears being upon his spirit, they were all silenced by that sweet word, which was seasonably brought to his remembrance, "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer."

He very frequently kept days of fasting and humiliation in secret. Sometimes he observed these monthly, and sometimes only upon special occasions; but the memorandums in his diary, not only while he was at Worthenbury, but often afterwards, shew what sweet communion he had with God in those solemn duties, which no eye can witness, but his "who seeth in secret," and will "reward openly." He writes "Remember, O my soul, such a day, as a day of more than ordinary engagements entered into, and strong resolutions taken up for closer walking, and more watchfulness. O my God, undertake for me." And upon another of those days he notes, "If sowing in tears be so sweet, what then will the harvest be, when I shall reap in joy? Bless the Lord, O my soul, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and will in due time heal all thy diseases."

## CHAP. IV.

*His Marriage, Family, Family-Religion, and the Education of his Children.*

HE removed from Emeral, to the house in Worthenbury, which the Judge had built for him, in February, 1658-9, and then had one of his sisters with him to keep his house. No sooner had he a tent, but God had an altar in it. There he set up repetition on Sabbath-evenings, and welcomed his neighbours to it. His christian friends often, and sometimes his brethren in the ministry, kept days of fasting and prayer at his house. He used to tell people when they had built new houses, they must dedicate them; referring to Deut. xx. 5; and the title of Psalm xxx; that is, they must invite God to their houses, and devote them to his service.

Providence having thus brought him into a house of his own, soon after provided a help-mate for him. After long agitation, and some discouragement and opposition from the father, April 26, 1660, he married Katherine, the only daughter and heiress of Mr. Samuel Matthews, of Broad-oak, in the township of Iscoyd, in Flintshire. Mr. Matthews was a gentleman of a very competent estate; such a one as King James the First used to say, was the happiest lot of all others, which set a man below the office of a justice of peace, and above that of a petty constable. This was his only child: very fair and honourable overtures had been made for her disposal; but it pleased God so to order events, and to over-rule the spirits of those concerned, that she was reserved to be a blessing to this good man, in things pertaining "both to life and godliness."

The day before his marriage, he kept as a day of secret prayer and fasting. He used to say, Those who

would have comfort in that change of their condition. must see to it, that they bring none of the guilt of their single state into the married state. The presence of Christ at a wedding, will turn the water into wine; and he will come, if he be invited by prayer.

He took all occasions while he lived, to express his thankfulness to God, for the great comfort he had in this relation. "A day of mercy (so he writes on his marriage-day) never to be forgotten." "God had given him one (as he writes afterwards) every way his helper, in whom he had much comfort, and for whom he thanked God with all his heart." He writes in his diary, "April 26, 1680—This day we have been married twenty years, in which time we have received of the Lord more than twenty thousand mercies; to God be glory." His usual prayer for his friends in the married state, was according to his own practice, that they might be "mutually serviceable to each other's faith and holiness, and jointly serviceable to God's honour and glory."

Her father, though he put some hardships upon him in the terms, and had been somewhat averse to the match, yet, by Mr. Henry's great prudence, and God's good providence, was influenced to give a free consent to it; and with his own hand to give her in marriage. From this, as from other experiences, Mr. Henry had learned to say with assurance, "It is not in vain to wait upon God and keep his way." Mr. Matthews settled part of his estate before marriage upon them and their heirs; he lived about seven years after; and when he died, the remainder came to them. This competent estate, which Providence brought into his hand, was not only a comfortable support to him when he was turned out of his living, and when many faithful ministers of Christ were reduced to great poverty and straits; but it enabled him likewise, as he had opportunity, to preach the gospel freely, which he did to his dying day; and also to give for the relief of the

needy, in which he sowed plentifully, to a very large proportion of his income. He often blessed God that he had wherewith to do this : remembering the words of the Lord, how he said, " It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Such was his house, and such the vine which God graciously planted by the side of his house. By her God gave him six children, all born within less than eight years ; the two eldest, sons, John and Matthew : the other four, daughters, Sarah, Katherine, Eleanor, and Ann. His eldest son John died of the measles, in the sixth year of his age ; and the rest were in mercy spared to him.

The Lord having built him up into a family, he was careful and faithful in making good his solemn vow at his ordination, that " he and his house would serve the Lord." He would often say, " We are that really, which we are relatively. It is not so much what we are at church, as what we are in our families. Religion in the power of it will be family religion." In that his practice was very exemplary ; he was one that walked before his house in a perfect way, with a perfect heart, and therein behaved himself wisely. His constant care and prudent endeavour was, not only to put iniquity far from his tabernacle, but that where he dwelt, the word of Christ might dwell richly. If he might have no other church, yet he had a " church in his house."

He made conscience of closet-worship, and abounded in it, not making his family-worship an excuse for the omission of that. He has this affecting note in his diary, upon the removing of his closet, but from one room to another : " This day my new closet was consecrated, if I may say so, with this prayer :—" That all the prayers that ever should be made in it, according to the will of God, morning, evening, and at noon, ordinary or extraordinary, might be accepted of God, and obtain a gracious answer. Amen and amen."—It was the caution and advice which he frequently

gave to his children and friends ; "Be sure you look to your secret duty ; keep that up whatever you do ; the soul cannot prosper in the neglect of it." He observed, that "apostacy generally begins at the closet-door. Secret prayer is first neglected, and carelessly performed, then frequently omitted, and after awhile wholly cast off ; and then farewell God and Christ and all religion." He also advised, that secret duty be performed secretly, which was the admonition he gave to those who were imprudently loud in that duty.

Besides this, he and his wife constantly prayed together morning and evening ; and if they were together, at home or abroad, it was never intermitted. From his own experience of the benefit of this practice, he would take all opportunities to recommend it to those in that relation, as conducing very much to the comfort of it, and to their furtherance in that, which he would say, is their great duty ; to "do all they can to help one another to heaven." He would say, that this duty of husbands and wives, praying together, is intimated in that of the apostle, 1 Pet. iii. 7. where they are exhorted to "live as heirs together of the grace of life, that their prayers, (especially their prayers together,) be not hindered ;" that nothing may be done to hinder them from praying together, nor to hinder them in it, nor to spoil the success of those prayers. This sanctifies the relation, and fetches in a blessing upon it ; makes the comforts of it the more sweet, and the cares and crosses of it the more easy ; and is an excellent means of preserving and increasing mutual love. Many to whom he has recommended this duty, have blessed God for him, and for his advice concerning it. When he was abroad and slept with any of his friends, he would remind them of his rule, that "they who sleep together must pray together." In the performance of this part of his daily worship he was usually short, but often much affected.

Besides these, he made conscience, and made a business of family-worship in all the parts of it ;

and in it he was uniform, steady, and constant, from the time that he was first called to the charge of a family, to his dying day; and according to his own practice, he took all occasions to press it upon others. His doctrine once from Josh. xxiv. 15, was, that "family-worship is family-duty." He would say sometimes, "if the worship of God be not in the house, write, 'Lord have mercy upon us' upon the door, for there is a plague, a curse in it."\* It is the opinion of Archbishop Tillotson, that "constant family-worship is so necessary to keep alive a sense of God and religion in the minds of men, that he sees not how any family that neglects it can in reason be esteemed a family of christians, or indeed to have any religion at all." How earnestly would Mr. Henry reason with people about this matter, and tell them what a blessing it would bring upon them, their houses, and all that they had. He that makes his house a little church, shall find, that God will make it a little sanctuary. It may be of use to give a particular account of this practice in this matter, because it was very exemplary. As to the time of it, his rule was, commonly the earlier the better, both morning and evening; in the morning, before worldly business crowded in, "Early will I seek thee:" he that is the First should have the first; nor is it fit that the worship of God should stand by and wait, while the world's turn is served. And, early in the evening, before the children and servants began to be sleepy; and therefore, if it might be, he would have prayer before supper, that the body might be the more fit to serve the soul in that service of God. And indeed, he industriously contrived all the circumstances of his family-worship, so as to

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\* It was customary to write "Lord have mercy upon us" on the doors of houses, when the family was infected with plague.—EDITOR.



make it most solemn, and most likely to answer the end. He always made it the business of every day, and not, as too many make it, a by-business. This being his fixed principle, all other affairs gave way to this. When some objected, that they could not get time for family-worship; he would tell them, that if they would put on christian resolution at first, they would not find the difficulty so great as they imagined; but after awhile, their other affairs would fall in easily and naturally with this; especially where there is that wisdom which is profitable to direct. Nay, they would find it to be a great preserver of order and decency in a family, and it would be like a hem to all their other business, to keep it from ravelling. He was ever careful to have all his family present at family-worship; though sometimes, living in the country, he had a great household; yet he would have not only his children, sojourners, and domestic servants, but his workmen, day-labourers, and all that were employed for him, if they were within call, to be present, to join with him in this service. As it was often an act of his charity to set them to work for him, so to that he added this act of piety, to set them to work for God; and usually when he paid them their wages, he gave them some good counsel about their souls. If any that should come to family-worship were at a distance, and must be staid for long, he would rather want them, than put the duty much out of time; and would sometimes say at night, "Better one away than all sleepy."

The performances of his family-worship were the same morning and evening. He observed that under the law, the morning and the evening lamb had the same meat-offering and drink-offering, Exod. xxix. 38—41. He always began with a short, but very solemn prayer, imploring the divine presence, assistance, and acceptance; particularly begging a blessing upon the word to be read, in reference to which

he often put up this petition, "That the same Spirit who indited the Scripture, would enable us to understand it, and to learn something out of it, that may do us good." He commonly concluded even this short prayer, as he did also his blessings before and after meat, with a doxology, as Paul upon all occasions, "To him be glory, &c." which is properly adoration, and is an essential part of prayer.

He next sang a Psalm, and commonly one of David's: and his usual way was to sing a whole Psalm throughout, though perhaps a long one, and to sing quick, yet with a good variety of proper and pleasant tunes: and that he might do so, usually the Psalm was sung without reading the lines, every one in the family having a book. He preferred this to the common way of singing, where it might conveniently be done, as more agreeable to the practice of the primitive church, and the reformed churches abroad; and by this means he thought the duty more likely to be performed "in the Spirit and with the understanding;" the sense being not so broken, nor the affections so interrupted, as in reading the lines. He would say, that a Scripture-ground for singing Psalms in families, might be taken from Psalm cxviii. 15. "The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacle of the righteous."

He next read a portion of Scripture, taking the bible in order; and would sometimes blame those who only pray with their families, and do not read the Scripture. In prayer we speak to God; by the word he speaks to us. In the tabernacle the priests were every day to burn incense, and to light the lamps; the former representing the duty of prayer, the latter reading the word. Sometimes he would say, "Those do well that pray morning and evening in their families; those do better that pray and read the Scriptures; but those do best of all

that pray and read and sing psalms: and christians should covet earnestly the best gifts."

He advised reading the scripture in order: saying, "Wherever God has a mouth to speak, we should have an ear to hear; and the diligent searcher may find much excellent matter in those parts of scripture, which we are sometimes tempted to think might have been spared.

What he read in the family he always expounded, and exhorted all ministers to do so, as an excellent means of increasing their acquaintance with the scripture. His expositions were not so much critical, as plain, practical, and useful; and such as tended to answer the end for which the scriptures were written, which is to make us wise to salvation. Herein he had a peculiar excellence, performing that daily exercise with so much judgment, and at the same time with such facility and clearness, as if every exposition had been premeditated; and they were very instructive, as well as affecting to the auditors. His observations were many times very striking and uncommon. He generally reduced the passage read, to some heads, by such a distribution as the matter easily fell into. He often mentioned that saying of Tertullian, "I adore the fulness of the scriptures." When he had hit upon a useful observation that was new to him, he would sometimes say afterwards to those about him; "How often have I read this chapter, and never before now took notice of such a thing in it." He put his children to write these expositions; and when they were gone from him, the strangers that sojourned with him did the same. What collections his children had, though but broken and imperfect hints, were afterwards of use to them and their families. Some exposition of this nature, that is, plain and practical, and helping to raise the affections and guide the conversation by

the word, he often wished was published by some good hand, for the benefit of families. But such was his great modesty and self-diffidence, though few were more fit for it, that he would never be persuaded to attempt any thing of that kind himself.\* As an evidence how much his heart was set upon having the word of God read and understood in families, take this passage out of his last will: "I give and bequeath to each of my four daughters Mr. Pool's English Annotations upon the Bible, in two volumes, of the last and best edition that shall be to be had at the time of my decease; together with Mr. Barton's last and best Translation of the Singing Psalms, one to each of them; requiring and requesting them to make daily use of the same, for the instruction, edification, and comfort of themselves and their families." But it is time we proceed to the method of his family-worship.

The chapter or psalm being read and expounded, he required from his children some account of what they could remember of it; and sometimes would discourse with them plainly and familiarly about it, that he might lead them into an acquaintance with it; and, if it might be, impress something of it upon their hearts.

He then prayed, and always kneeling, which he looked upon as the fittest and most proper posture for prayer; and he took care that his family should address themselves to the duty, with the outward expressions of reverence and composedness. He usually fetched his matter and expressions in prayer, from the chapter read, and the psalm sung, which was often very affecting, and helped much to excite

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\* This his wish was fulfilled to the utmost by his son Matthew Henry, in his well-known and excellent Expositions of the Bible.

praying graces. He sometimes observed in those psalms, where reference is had to the scripture-stories, as Psalm lxxxiii. and many others, that those who were well acquainted with the scriptures, would not need to make use of the help of "prescribed forms:" they are very necessary for those that cannot pray without them, but are unbecoming those that can; as a go-cart, he used to say, is needful to a child, or crutches to one that is lame, but neither of them agreeable to one that needs them not. In family-prayer he was usually most full in giving thanks for family-mercies, confessing family-sins, and begging family-blessings. He would sometimes be very particular in prayer for his family; if any were absent, they were sure to have an express petition put up for them. He used to observe, concerning Job, chap. i. 5, that he offered burnt-offerings for his children, "according to the number of them all," an offering for each child. He always observed at the annual return of the birth-day of each, to bless God for his mercy to him and his wife in that child; the giving of it, the comfort they had in it, &c. with some special request to God for it. Every servant and sojourner, at their coming into his family and going out, besides the daily remembrances of them, had a particular petition put up for them, according as their circumstances were. The strangers that were at any time within his gates, he was wont particularly to recommend to God in prayer, with much affection and christian concern for them and their affairs. He was daily mindful of those that desired their prayers for them, and would say sometimes, "It is a great comfort that God knows whom we mean in prayer, though we do not name them." Particular providences concerning the country, as to health or sickness, good or bad weather, or the like, he commonly took notice of in prayer, as there was

occasion, and would often beg of God to fit us for the next providence, whatever it might be. Nor did he ever forget to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. He always concluded family-prayer, both morning and evening, with a solemn benediction, after the doxology: "The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be with us, &c." Thus did he daily "bless his household."

Immediately after the prayer was ended, his children together, with bended knees, asked a blessing of him and their mother; that is, desired them to pray to God to bless them: which blessing was given with great solemnity and affection; and if any of them were absent, they were remembered, "The Lord help you and your brother," or, "you and your sister that is absent."

This was his daily worship, which he never altered, unless as is after mentioned, though he went from home ever so early, or returned ever so late, or had ever so much business for his servants to do. He would say, that sometimes he saw cause to shorten the several parts; but he would never omit any of them; for if an excuse be admitted for an omission, it will be often returning. He was not willing, unless the necessity was urgent, that any should go from his house in a morning before family-worship; but upon such an occasion would remind his friends, that "prayer and provender never hinder a journey."

He managed his daily family-worship, so as to make it a pleasure and not a task to his children and servants; for he was seldom long, and never tedious in the service; the variety of the duties made it the more pleasant; so that none who joined with him had ever any reason to say, What a weariness is it! Such an excellent way he had of rendering religion the most sweet and amiable employment in the world; and so careful was he, like Jacob, "to drive, as the children could go," not putting "new wine into old

bottles." If some good people that mean well would do likewise, it might prevent many of those prejudices, which young persons are apt to conceive against religion, when the services of it are made a toil and a terror to them.

On Thursday evenings,\* (instead of reading,) he catechised his children and servants. On Saturday evenings, his children and servants gave him an account what they could remember of chapters expounded the week before, in order; each a several part, helping one another's memories for recollecting it. This he called "gathering up the fragments which remained, that nothing might be lost." He would say to them sometimes, as Christ to his disciples, "Have ye understood all these things?" If not, he explained them more fully. This exercise, which he constantly kept up, was both delightful and profitable, and being managed by him with much prudence and sweetness, helped to instil betimes into those about him, the knowledge and love of the holy scriptures.

When he had sojourners in the family, who were able to bear a part in such a service, he had commonly in the winter-time set weekly conferences on questions proposed, for their mutual edification and comfort in the fear of God; the substance of what was said, he himself took and kept an account of in writing.

But the Lord's day he called and counted the queen of days, the pearl of the week, and observed it accordingly. The fourth commandment intimates a special regard to be had to the Sabbath in families, "Thou, and thy son, and thy daughter," &c. It is "the Sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings." In this, therefore, he was very exact, and abounded in the work of the Lord in his family on that day. Whatever were his public opportunities, which varied, as we shall find afterwards, his family religion on

that day was the same. Extraordinary sacrifices must never supersede the "continual burnt-offering, and its meat-offering." (Numb. xxviii. 15.) His common salutation of his family or friends, on the Lord's-day morning was that of the primitive christians: "The Lord is risen, he is risen indeed;" making it his chief business on that day to celebrate the memory of Christ's resurrection; and he would say, sometimes, "every Lord's day is a true christian's Easter-day." He took care to have his family ready early on that day, and was then larger in exposition and prayer, than on other days. He would often remember, that under the law the daily sacrifice was doubled on Sabbath-days, two lambs in the morning, and two in the evening. He had always a particular subject for his exposition on Sabbath-mornings; as the harmony of the Evangelists several times over; the Scripture-prayers; Old Testament prophecies of Christ. He constantly sung a psalm after dinner, and another after supper, on the Lord's-day. And in the evening, his children and servants were catechised and examined in the sense and meaning of the answers in the catechism, that they might not say it (as he used to tell them) like a parrot, by rote. Then the day's sermons were repeated, commonly by one of his children when they were grown up, and the family gave an account what they could remember of the word of the day, which he endeavoured to fasten upon them, as a nail in a sure place. In his prayers on the evening of the Sabbath, he was often more than ordinarily enlarged; as one that found not only God's service perfect freedom, but his work its own wages; and a great reward, not only *after* keeping, but (as he used to observe from Psalm xix. 11.) *in* keeping God's commandments; a present reward of obedience in obedience. In that prayer he was usually very particular, in praying for his family, and all that



belonged to it. It was a prayer he often put up, that they might have grace to behave "as a minister, and a minister's wife, and a minister's children, and a minister's servants should behave, that the ministry might in nothing be blamed." He would sometimes, especially on Sabbath-evenings, be a particular intercessor for the towns and parishes adjacent; for Chester, Shrewsbury, Nantwich, Wrexham, Whitchurch, &c. those nests of souls, wherein there are so many, that cannot discern between their right hand and their left in spiritual things, &c. He closed his Sabbath-work in his family with singing Psalm cxxxiv, and after it, a solemn blessing of his household.

Thus was he prophet and priest in his own house; and he was king there too, ruling in the fear of God, and not suffering sin upon any under his roof. But many of his servants, by the blessing of God upon his endeavours, got those good impressions upon their souls, which they retained ever after; and blessed God with all their hearts, that ever they came under his roof. Few went from his service till they were married, and some after they had buried their yoke-fellows, returned to it again, saying, "Master, it is good to be here."

He brought up his children in the fear of God, with a great deal of care and tenderness; and did by his practice, as well as upon all occasions in discourses, condemn the indiscretion of those parents, who are partial in their affection to their children, making a difference between them. He observed that this often proved of ill consequence in families; and laid a foundation of envy, contempt, and discord, which turn to their shame and ruin. His carriage towards his children was very mild and gentle, as one who desired rather to be loved than feared by them. He was careful not to provoke them to wrath, nor to discourage them, as he was to

“bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” He ruled indeed, and kept up his authority, but it was with wisdom and love, and not with a high hand. He allowed his children a great degree of freedom with him, which gave him the opportunity of reasoning them, not frightening them, into that which is good. He did much towards the instruction of his children in the way of familiar discourse, according to that excellent directory for religious education, (Deut. vi. 7.) “Thou shalt whet these things, (so the word is, which he said noted frequent repetition of the same things) upon thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, &c.” which made them love home, and delight in his company, and greatly endeared religion to them.

He endeavoured to make the whole word of God familiar to them, especially the stories of Scripture, and to bring them to understand and love it, and then they would easily remember it. He used to observe from Psalm cxix. 93, “I will never forget thy precepts, for with them thou hast quickened me;” that we are then likely to remember the word of God, when it doth us good.

He was careful to bring his children betimes (when they were about sixteen years of age) to the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper, to “take the covenant of God upon themselves, and make their dedication to God their own act and deed;” and a great deal of pains he took with them, to prepare them for that great ordinance.

He not only taught his children betimes to pray, which he did especially by his own pattern, his method and expression in prayer being very easy and plain, but when they were young he put them upon praying together, and appointed them, and such of their age, as might occasionally be with them, to spend some time together on Saturdays in the afternoon, in reading good books, especially those for

children, and in singing and praying. He would sometimes tell them for their encouragement, that the God with whom we have to do, understands broken language; and if we do as well as we can in the sincerity of our hearts, we shall not only be accepted, but taught to do better: "To him that hath shall be given."

He sometimes set his children, in their reading the scriptures, to gather out such passages as they took most notice of, and thought most considerable, and write them down: though this performance was very small, yet the endeavour was of great use. He also directed them to insert in a book, which each of them had for the purpose, remarkable sayings, and stories, which they met with in reading such other good books as he put into their hands.

He took a pleasure in relating to them the remarkable providences of God, both in "his own time and in the days of old," which he said parents were taught to do by that appointment, (Exod. 26, 27.) "your children shall ask you in time to come, what mean you by this service?" and you shall tell them so and so.

What his pious care was concerning his children, and with what a godly jealousy he was jealous over them, take in one instance: when they had been for a week or fortnight kindly entertained at Boreatton, as they often were, he thus writes in his diary upon their return home, "My care and fear is, lest converse with such so far above them, though of the best, should lift them up, when I had rather they should be kept low." For he was very solicitous to teach his children, not to mind high things, not to desire them, not to expect them in this world, which was his own character.

We shall conclude this Chapter with another passage out of his diary, April 12, 1681. "This day fourteen years the Lord took my first-born son

from me, the beginning of my strength, with a stroke. In remembrance whereof my heart melted this evening; I begged pardon for the Jonah that raised that storm. I blessed the Lord that hath spared the rest. I begged mercy, mercy for every one of them, and absolutely and unreservedly devoted and dedicated them, myself, my whole-self, estate, interest, life, to the will and service of that God from whom I received all. Father, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, &c."

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## CHAP. V.

*His ejection from Worthenbury; his removal to Broad-Oak, and other events of the year 1672.*

We must now return to our history, and shall look back to the first year after his marriage, which was 1660, the year that King Charles the Second came in; a year of great changes and struggles in the land. Many of his best friends in Worthenbury parish were lately removed by death; the Emeral-family contrary to what it had been; and the same spirit, which that year revived over all the nation, was working violently in that country, namely, a spirit of great enmity to such men as Mr. Henry was. Worthenbury, upon the King's coming in, returned to its former relation to Bangor, and was looked upon as a chapelry dependant upon that. Mr. Robert Fogg had for many years held the sequestered rectory of Bangor, but now Dr. Henry Bridgman, son to the Bishop of Chester, and brother to the Lord-keeper Bridgman, returned to the possession of it, by which Mr. Henry was soon apprehensive that his interest at Worthenbury

was shaken: but thus he writes, "The will of the Lord be done. Lord, if my work be done here, provide some other for this people that may be more skilful, and more successful, and cut out work for me elsewhere; however, I will take nothing ill which God doth with me."

He laboured what he could to make Dr. Bridgman his friend, who gave him good words, was very civil to him, and assured him that he would never remove him, till the law did. But he must look upon himself as the Doctor's Curate, and depending upon his will, which kept him in continual expectation of a removal; however, he continued in his liberty there above a year, though in very precarious circumstances.

The grand question now on foot was, whether to conform or not. He used all possible means to satisfy himself concerning it, by reading and discourse, particularly at Oxford, with Dr. Fell, afterwards Bishop of Oxford, but in vain; his dissatisfaction remained; however, says he, "I dare not judge those that do conform, for who am I that I should judge my brother?" He has noted, that being at Chester, in discourse with the Dean, Chancellor, and others, about this time, the great argument they used to persuade him to conform was, that else he would lose his preferment; and what, said they, you are a young man, and are you wiser than the King and Bishops? but this is his reflection upon it afterwards, "God grant I may never be left to consult with flesh and blood in such matters!"

In September, 1660, Mr. Fogg, Mr. Steele, and Mr. Henry were presented at Flint Assizes for not reading the Common Prayer, though as yet it was not enjoined; but there were some busy people, that would out-run the law. They entered their appearance, and it fell; for the King's "declaration touching ecclesiastical affairs" came out soon after, which promised liberty, and gave hopes of settlement; but

the Spring Assizes afterwards, Mr. Steele and Mr. Henry were presented again. On this he writes, "Be merciful to me, O God, for man would swallow me up. The Lord shew me what he would have me to do, for I am afraid of nothing but sin."

It appears by the hints of his diary that he had melancholy apprehensions at this time about public affairs, seeing and hearing of so many faithful ministers disturbed, silenced, and ensnared; the ways of Sion mourning, and the quiet in the land treated as the troublers of it: his soul wept in secret for it: yet he joined in the annual commemoration of the King's restoration, and preached on Mark xii. 17. "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," considering (says he) that it was his right: also the sad posture of the civil government through usurpers, and the manner of his coming in, without bloodshed. He would all his days speak of this as a national mercy, but what he rejoiced in with a great deal of trembling for the ark of God. He would sometimes say, "That during those years, between forty and sixty, though on civil accounts there were great disorders, and the foundations were out of course, yet in the matters of God's worship, things went well; there was freedom, and reformation, and a face of godliness was upon the nation, though there were those that made but a mask of it. Ordinances were administered in power and purity, and though there was much amiss, yet religion, at least in the profession of it, did prevail. This, says he, we know very well, let men say what they will of those times."

In November, 1660, he took the oath of allegiance at Orton, before Sir Thomas Hanmer, and two other Justices, of which he left a memorandum in his diary, with this added, "God so help me, as I purpose in my heart to do accordingly." Nor could

any one more conscientiously observe that oath of God than he did, nor more sincerely promote the ends of it.

His annuity from Emeral was now withheld, because he did not read the Common Prayer, though as yet there was no law for reading it: hereby he was disabled to do what he had been wont, for the help and relief of others; and this he recorded as that which troubled him most under that disappointment; but he blessed God, that he had a "heart to do good, even when his hand was empty." When the Emeral family was unkind to him, he reckoned it a great mercy, which he gave God thanks for, that Mr. Broughton and his family, who were of considerable figure in the parish, continued their kindness and respects to him, and their countenance of his ministry; which he makes a grateful mention of more than once in his diary.

Many attempts were made in the year 1661, to disturb and ensnare him, and it was still expected that he would have been hindered. "Methinks, says he, "Sabbaths were never so sweet as they are, now we are kept at such uncertainties; now, a day in thy courts is better than a thousand: such a day as this, said he, of a sacrament-day that year, is better than ten thousand; O that we might yet see many such days."

He was advised by Mr. Radcliff, of Chester, and others of his friends to enter an action against Mr. Puleston for his annuity, and did so; but "concerning the success of it," says he, "I am not over solicitous; for though it be my due, (Luke x. 7.) yet it was not that which I preached for: God knows, I would much rather preach for nothing than not at all; and besides, I know assuredly, if I should be cast, God will make it up to me some other way."

After some proceedings he solicited Mr. Puleston to refer it; having learned, says he, that it is no disparagement but an honor, for the party wronged, to be first in seeking reconciliation. "The Lord, if it be his will, incline his heart to peace. I have now," says he, "two great concerns upon the wheel; one, in reference to my claims for time past, the other, as to my continuance for the future; the Lord be my friend in both; but of the two, rather in the latter! but many of greater gifts and graces than I are laid aside already; and when my turn may come, I know not; the will of God be done; he can do his work without us."

The issue of this affair was, to discharge Philip Henry from the Chapel of Worthenbury. He preached his farewell sermon on Phil. i. 27. "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ." In which (as he says in his diary) his desire and design was rather to profit than affect. It matters not what becomes of me, whether I come unto you, or else be absent, but "let your conversation be as becomes the gospel." His parting prayer for them was, "The Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation." Thus he ceased to preach to his people there, but not to love them, and pray for them; and could not but think there remained some dormant relation between him and them.

As to the arrears of his annuity from Mr. Puleston when he was displaced; after some time Mr. Puleston was willing to give him 100*l.* which was much less than what was due, upon condition that he would surrender his deed of annuity, and lease of the house: this he for peace-sake was willing to do, and so lost the benefit of Judge Puleston's great kindness to him. This was not completed till September, 1662, until which time he continued in the house at Worthenbury, but never preached so much as once in the church, though there were vacancies several times.



Mr. Richard Hilton was immediately put into the curacy of Worthenbury by Dr. Bridgman. Mr. Henry went to hear him, as long as he continued at Worthenbury. He kept up his correspondence with Mr. Hilton : and, (as he says in his diary,) endeavoured to possess him with right thoughts of his work, and advised him the best he could in the soul-affairs of that people ; which, says he, " he seemed to take well ; I am sure I meant it so, and the Lord make him faithful ! "

Immediately after he was silenced and removed from Worthenbury, he was solicited to preach at Bangor, and Dr. Bridgman was willing to permit it occasionally ; and intimated to his curate there, that he should never hinder it ; but Mr. Henry declined it. Though his silence was his great grief, yet such was his tenderness, that he was not willing to discourage Mr. Hilton at Worthenbury, by drawing so many of the people from him, as would certainly have followed him to Bangor ; but (says he) " I cannot get my heart into such a spiritual frame on sabbath-days now as formerly ; which is both my sin and my affliction. Lord, quicken me with quickening grace. "

When the King was restored, and shewed, as many thought, so good a temper, some of his friends were very earnest with him to revive his acquaintance and interest at court, which it was thought he might easily do. It was reported in the country, that the Duke of York had enquired after him ; but he heeded not the report, nor would he be persuaded to make any addresses that way. " For," says he, " my friends do not know so well as I, the strength of temptation, and my own inability to deal with it. Lord, lead me not into temptation. "

He was greatly affected with the temptations and afflictions of many faithful ministers of Christ at this time ; by the pressing of conformity ; and kept many private days of fasting and prayer in his own house, seeking to turn away the wrath of God from the land.

He greatly pitied some, who by the urgency of friends, and the fear of want, were over-persuaded to put a force upon themselves in their conformity. The Lord keep me, says he, in the critical time.

He preached occasionally in divers neighbouring places, till Bartholomew-day, 1662, the day, says he, "which our sins have made one of the saddest days to England, since the death of Edward the VIth; but even this for good, though we know not how, nor which way." He was invited to preach at Bangor on the black Bartholomew-day, and prepared a sermon on John vii. 37. "In the last day, that great day of the feast," &c. but was prevented from preaching it; and was loath to strive against so strong a stream.

His moderation in his non-conformity was very exemplary and eminent, and had a great influence upon many, to keep them from running into an uncharitable and schismatical separation; which, upon all occasions, he bore his testimony against. In church-government, he desired and wished for archbishop Usher's reduction of episcopacy. He thought it lawful to join in the Common Prayer in public assemblies, and practised accordingly; and endeavoured to satisfy others concerning it. He was much afraid of extremes, and solicitous for nothing more than to maintain and promote christian love and charity among professors.

But to proceed in his story. At Michaelmas, 1662, he left Worthenbury, and came with his family to Broad-Oak. Being cast by divine Providence into this new place and state of life, his care and prayer was, that he might have "grace and wisdom to manage it to the glory of God, which (says he) is my chief end." Within three weeks after his coming hither, his second son was born, which we mention for the sake of his remark upon it; "We have no reason to call him Benoni, I wish we had none to call him Ichabod." And on the day of his family-thanksgiving for that mercy, he writes, "We have reason to rejoice

with trembling, for it goes ill with the church and people of God ; and reason to fear worse, because of our sins, and our enemies' wrath."

For several years after he settled at Broad-Oak, he and his family went constantly on Lord's-days to the public worship at Whitewell-chapel, which was near, when there was any supply there; and if none, then to Tylstock, where Mr. Zachary Thomas continued for about half a year, and that place was a little sanctuary: when that spring failed, he usually went to Whitchurch. He did not preach for a great while, unless occasionally, when he visited his friends, or to his own family on Lord's-days, when the weather hindered them from going abroad. He comforted himself, that sometimes, in going to public worship, he had an "opportunity of instructing and exhorting those that were in company with him by the way," according as he saw they had need; in this his lips fed many, and his tongue was as choice silver. He acted according to that rule which he often laid down to himself and others, that "when we cannot do what we would, we must do what we can, and the Lord will accept us in it." He made the best of the sermons he heard in public. "It is a mercy," says he, "we have bread, though it be not, as it hath been, of the finest wheat." Those are froward children who throw away the meat they have, if it be wholesome, because they have not what they would not have. When he met with preaching that was weak, his note is, "That is a poor sermon indeed, out of which no good lesson may be learned." He had often occasion to remember that verse of Mr. Herbert:

"The worst speak something good; if all want sense,  
God takes the text, and preacheth patience."

Nay, and once he says, he could not avoid thinking of Eli's sons, who "made the sacrifices of the Lord to be abhorred;" yet he went to bear his testimony to

public ordinances ; “ For still,” says he, “ the Lord loveth the gates of Zion, more than all the dwellings of Jacob ; and so do I.” Such, then, were his sentiments of things, expecting that God would yet open a door of return to former public liberty, which he much desired and prayed for. In hopes of that, he was unwilling to fall into the stated exercise of his ministry, as indeed the sober nonconformists in those parts generally were : but it was his grief and burden, that he had not an opportunity of doing more for God. He had but few opportunities of usefulness ; but he was very diligent and faithful to improve them. When he visited his friends, how did he lay himself out to do them good ! Being asked once, where he made a visit, to expound and pray, which his friends returned him thanks for, he thus writes upon it, “ They cannot thank me so much for my pains, but I thank them more, and my Lord God, especially, for the opportunity.” Read his conflict with himself at this time :— “ I own myself a minister of Christ, yet do nothing as a minister ; what will excuse me ? Is it enough for me to say, Behold, I stand in the market-place, and no man hath hired me ?” And he comforts himself with this appeal ; “ Lord, thou knowest what will I have to thy work, public or private, if I had a call and opportunity ; and shall this willing mind be accepted ?” Surely this is a melancholy consideration, and lays a great deal of blame somewhere, that such a man as Mr. Henry, so well qualified with gifts and graces for ministerial work, and in the prime of his days for usefulness, should be so industriously thrust out of the vineyard as a useless and unprofitable servant. This is for a lamentation ; especially since it was not his case alone, but the lot of so many hundreds of the same character.

In these circumstances of silence and restraint, he took comfort himself, and administered comfort to others, from that scripture, Isa. xvi. 4. “ Let mine

outcasts dwell with thee, Moab." God's people may be an outcast people, cast out of men's love, their synagogue, their country; but God will own his people when men cast them out; they are out-casts, but they are his, and somewhere or other he will provide a dwelling for them. There were many worthy able ministers in those parts turned out, both from work and subsistence, that had not such comfortable support for the life that now is, as Mr. Henry had; for whom he was most affectionately concerned, and to whom he shewed kindness. There were computed within a few miles round him, so many ministers turned out to the wide world, stripped of all their maintenance, and exposed to continual hardships, as with their wives and children, having most of them numerous families, made up above a hundred, that lived upon Providence. Yet, though oft reduced to want and straits, they were not forsaken, but were enabled to rejoice in the Lord, and to joy in the God of their salvation notwithstanding: to them the promise was fulfilled, Psalm xxxvii. 3, "So shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

One observation Mr. Henry made, not long before he died, when he had been young, and then was old, "That, though many of the ejected ministers were brought very low, had many children, were greatly harassed by persecution, and their friends generally poor and unable to support them, yet in all his acquaintance he never knew, nor could remember to have heard of, any non-conformist minister in prison for debt."

In October, 1663, Mr. Steele and Mr. Henry, and some other of their friends, were taken up and brought prisoners to Hanmer, under pretence of some plot, said to be on foot against the government: there they were kept under confinement some days; on which he writes—"It is sweet being in any condition with a clear conscience. The sting of death is sin, and so of

imprisonment also. It is the first time I ever was a prisoner; but perhaps it may not be the last. We felt no hardship; but we know not what we may." They were, after some days, examined by the deputy-lieutenants, charged with they knew not what, and so dismissed, finding verbal security to be forthcoming upon twenty-four hours notice. Mr. Henry returned to his tabernacle with thanksgivings to God, and a hearty prayer for his enemies, that God would forgive them.

In the beginning of the year 1665, when the act for a royal aid came out, the commissioners for Flintshire were pleased to nominate Mr. Henry sub-collector of the said tax for the township of Iscoyd, and Mr. Steele for the township of Hanmer. They intended thereby to put an affront and disparagement upon their ministry, and to show that they looked upon them but as laymen. His note upon it is, "It is not a sin which they put us upon, but it is a cross; and a cross in our way; and therefore to be taken up and borne with patience. When I had better work to do, I was wanting in my duty about it; and now this is put upon me, the Lord is righteous." He procured the gathering of it by others, only took account of it, and saw it duly done; and deserved, as he says he hoped he should, that inscription mentioned in Suetonius, "To the memory of an honest publican."

In September, 1665, he was again, by warrant from the deputy-lieutenants, carried prisoner to Hanmer, as was also Mr. Steele and others. He was examined about private meetings: some such, but private, indeed, he owned he had been present at of late in Shropshire, but the occasion was extraordinary; the plague was at that time raging in London, and he, and several of his friends having near relations there, thought it time to seek the Lord for them, and this was imputed to him as his crime. He was likewise charged with administering the Lord's Supper, which he denied, having never administered it since he was

disabled by the act of uniformity. After some days confinement, seeing they could prove nothing against him, he was discharged upon recognizance of twenty pounds, with two sureties, to be forthcoming upon notice, and to live peaceably. "But," says he, "our restraint was not strict, for we had liberty of prayer and conference together, to our mutual edification: thus, out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong, sweetness, and we found honey in the carcass of the lion." It was but a little before this, that Mr. Steele, setting out for London, was, by a warrant from the justices, under colour of the report of a plot, stopped and searched, and finding nothing to accuse him of, they seized his almanack, in which he kept his diary for that year; and it not being written very legibly they made what malicious readings and comments upon it they pleased, to his great wrong and reproach, though to all sober and sensible people, it discovered him to be a man, who kept a strict watch over his own heart, and who husbanded his time; and many said they got good by it, and should love him the better for it. This event made Mr. Henry somewhat more cautious and sparing in the records of his diary, when he saw "Evil men dig up mischief."

At Lady-day, 1666, the five-mile-act commenced, by which nonconformist ministers were forbidden, upon pain of six months imprisonment, to come, or be, within five miles of any corporation, or place, where they had been ministers, unless they would take an oath; of which Mr. Baxter says, it was credibly reported that the earl of Southampton, then lord high treasurer of England, said, "No honest man could take it."

On March 25, the day when that act took place, he thus writes: "A sad day among poor ministers up and down this nation; who by this act of restraint are forced to remove from among their friends, acquaintance, and relations, and sojourn among strangers, as

it were in Mesech, and in the tents of Kedar. But there is a God that tells their wanderings, and will put their tears, and the tears of their wives and children into his bottle : are they not in his book ? The Lord be a little sanctuary to them, and a place of refuge from the storm and tempest, and pity those places, from which they are ejected, and come and dwell where they may not."

He wished their removes might not be figurative of evil to these nations, as Ezekiel's were, Ezek. xii. 1, 2, 3. This severe dispensation forced Mr. Steele and his family from Hanmer, and so he lost the comfort of his neighbourhood ; but withal it drove Mr. Lawrence from Baschurch to Whitchurch parish, where he continued till he was driven thence too.

Mr. Henry's house at Broad Oak was but four reputed miles from the utmost limits of Worthenbury parish : but he got it measured, and accounting 1760 yards to a mile (according to the statute 35 Eliz., cap. 6.) it was found to be just five miles and threescore yards, which one would think might have been his security. But there were those near him who were ready to stretch such laws to the utmost rigour, under pretence of construing them in favour of the King, and therefore would have it to be understood of reputed miles. This obliged him for some time to leave his family, and sojourn among his friends, to whom he endeavoured, wherever he came, to impart some spiritual gift. At last he ventured home, presuming, among other things, that the warrant by which he was made collector of the royal aid, while that continued, would secure him, according to a proviso in the last clause of the act : when the gentlemen perceived this, they discharged him from that office, before he had served out the time.

He was much affected that the burning of London happened so soon after the nonconformists were banished out of it. He thought it was in mercy to



them that they were removed before that desolating judgment came; but that it spoke aloud to our governors, "Let my people go that they may serve me, and if ye will not, behold thus and thus I will do unto you." This was the Lord's voice crying in the city.

In the beginning of the year 1667, he removed with his family to Whitchurch, and dwelt there above a year, except that for one quarter of a year, about harvest, he returned to Broad-Oak. His remove to Whitchurch was partly to quiet his adversaries, who were ready to quarrel with him upon the five-mile act, and partly for the benefit of the school there for his children.

There, in April following, he buried his eldest son, not quite six years old, a child of extraordinary forwardness in learning, and of a very tractable disposition. This was a great affliction to the tender parents.

Many years after, he said, he thought he applied to himself at that time, but too sensibly, that scripture, Lam. iii. 1. "I am the man that hath seen affliction." And he would say to his friends upon such occasions, "Losers think they may have leave to speak; but they must take care what they say, lest, speaking amiss to God's dishonour, they make work for repentance, and shed tears that must be wept over again." He observed concerning this child, that he had always been very patient under rebukes, "The remembrance of which," says he, "teacheth me now how to carry it under the rebukes of my heavenly Father." His prayer under this providence was, "Shew me, Lord, shew me wherefore thou contendest with me. Have I over-boasted, over-loved, over-prized?" A Lord's-day intervening between the death and burial of the child, "I attended," said he, "on public ordinances, though sad in spirit, as Job, who after all the evil tidings that were brought him, whereof death of children was the last and heaviest, yet fell down and worshipped." And he would often say, upon such occa-

sions, "that weeping must not hinder sowing." Upon the interment of the child, he writes, "My dear child, now mine no longer, was laid in the cold earth; not lost, but sown to be raised again a glorious body; and I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." A few days after, his dear friend, Mr. Lawrence, then living in Whitchurch parish, buried a daughter that was grown up, very hopeful, who gave good evidence of a work of grace wrought upon her soul: "How willing," says he, "may parents be to part with such when the Lord calls; they are not lost, but gone before." And he has this further remark, "The Lord has made his poor servants, that have been often companions in his work, now companions in tribulation, the very same tribulation; me for my sin, him for his trial."

While he lived at Whitchurch, he attended constantly upon the public ministry, and there, as ever, he was careful to come at the beginning of the service, which he attended upon with reverence and devotion; standing all the time, even while the chapters were read. In the evening of the Lord's day, he spent some time in instructing his family, to which a few of his friends and neighbours in the town would sometimes come in; and it was a little gleam of opportunity, but very short; for, as he notes, "He was offended at it, who should rather have rejoiced; if by any means the work might be carried on in his people's souls."

In this year, I think, was the first time that he administered the Lord's Supper (very privately to be sure) after he was silenced by the act of uniformity; and he did not do it without mature deliberation. A fear of separation kept him from it so long. What induced him to it at last, I find thus under his own hand: "I am a minister of Christ, and as such I am obliged, by virtue of my office, by all means to endeavour the good of souls. Now here is a company of

serious Christians, whose lot is cast to live in a parish where there is one set over them, who preaches the truth; and they come to hear him, and join with him in other parts of the worship; only, as to the Lord's Supper, they scruple the lawfulness of the gesture of kneeling; and he tells them his hands are tied, and he cannot administer it unto them in any other way; wherefore they come to me, and tell me they earnestly long for that ordinance; and there is a competent number of them, and opportunity to partake; and how dare I deny this request of theirs, without betraying my ministerial trust, and incurring the guilt of a grievous omission?"

In February, 1667-8, Mr. Lawrence and he were invited by some of their friends to Betley, in Staffordshire, and, there being some little public connivance at that time, with the consent of all concerned, they adventured to preach in the church, one in the morning, and the other in the afternoon of the Lord's-day, very peaceably and profitably. This was soon reported in the House of Commons by a member of Parliament, with these additions, that they tore the Common-prayer book, trampled the surplice under their feet, pulled the minister of the place out of the pulpit, &c. reports which there was not the least colour for. But that story, with some others equally false, produced an address of the house to the King, to issue out a proclamation, for putting the laws in execution against papists and nonconformists, which was issued accordingly; though the King, at the opening of the session, a little before, had declared his desire, that, "some course might be taken, to compose the minds of his Protestant subjects in matters of religion;" which had raised the expectations of some, that there would be speedy enlargement; but Mr. Henry noted upon it, "We cannot expect too little of man, nor too much from God."

And here it may be very pertinent to observe, how

industrious Mr. Henry was at this time, when he and his friends suffered such hard things from the government, to preserve and promote a good affection to it notwithstanding. It was commonly charged at that time upon the nonconformists in general, especially from the pulpits, that they were all a factious turbulent people, and, as was said of old, (Ezra iv. 15.) "hurtful to kings and provinces;" that their meetings were for sowing sedition and discontent, and the like. There is some reason to think, that one thing intended by the hardships put upon them was, to drive them to this. "There is a way of making a wise man mad." But how peaceably they carried themselves, was manifest to God, and to the consciences of many. For an instance of it, it will not be amiss to give some account of a sermon which Mr. Henry preached in some very private meetings, such as were called seditious conventicles, in the year 1669, when it was a day of treading down, and perplexity: it was on that text, Psalm xxxv. 20. "Against them that are quiet in the land." Whence, though not to curry favour with rulers, for, whatever the sermon was, the very preaching of it, had it been known, must have been severely punished; but purely out of conscience towards God, he taught his friends this doctrine, "That it is the character of the people of God, that they are a quiet people in the land." This quietness he described "to be an orderly, peaceable subjection to governors and government in the Lord. We must maintain a reverent esteem for them, and their authority, in opposition to despising dominions; we must be meek under severe commands and burdensome impositions, not murmuring and complaining, as the Israelites against Moses and Aaron; but take them up as a cross in our way, and bear them, as we do foul weather. We must not speak evil of dignities, nor revile the ruler. Paul checked himself for this saying, I did not consider it, if I had, I would not have said so. We

must not traduce their government, as Absalom did David's. Great care is to be taken, how we speak of the faults of any, especially of rulers. The people of God make his word their rule, and by that they are taught, 1. that magistracy is God's ordinance, and magistrates God's ministers; that by him kings reign, and the powers that be, are ordained by him. 2. That they, as well as others, are to have their dues, honour, fear, and tribute. 3. That their lawful commands are to be obeyed, and that readily and cheerfully. That the penalties inflicted for not obeying unlawful commands are patiently to be undergone. This is the rule, and as many as walk according to this rule, "Peace shall be upon them," and there can be no danger of their unpeaceableness. They are taught to pray for kings, and all in authority, and God forbid we should do otherwise; yea, though they persecute us. Peaceable prayers bespeak a peaceable people. If some, professing religion, have been unquiet, their unquietness hath given the lie to their profession. Quietness is our badge, it will be our strength, our rejoicing in the day of evil; it is pleasing to God, it may work upon others. The means he prescribed for the keeping us quiet, were to get our hearts filled with the knowledge and belief of these two things: 1. That "the kingdom of Christ is not of this world:" many have thought otherwise, and it has made them unquiet. 2. "That the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God;" he needs not our sin to bring to pass his own counsel. We must mortify unquietness in the causes of it. We must always remember the oath of God: the oath of allegiance is an oath of quietness: and we must beware of the company and converse of those who are unquiet: though deceitful matters be devised, yet we must be quiet still; nay, be so much the more quiet. I have been thus large in gathering those hints out of that sermon, which he took all occasions, in other sermons, to inculcate, as all his brethren

likewise did, that, if possible, it may be a conviction to the present generation ; or, however, may be a witness in time to come, that the nonconformist ministers were not enemies to Cæsar, nor troublers of the land ; nor their meetings any way tending to the disturbance of the public peace ; but purely designed to help to repair the decays of christian piety. All that knew Mr. Henry, knew very well that his practice, all his days, was consonant to these his settled principles.

In May, 1668, he returned with his family from Whitchurch to Broad-Oak, which, through the good hand of his God upon him, continued his settled home, without any remove from it, till he was removed to his long home about twenty-eight years after. The severity of the five-mile-act began now a little to be abated, at least in the country ; and he was desirous to be more useful to the neighbours, among whom God had given him an estate, than he could be at a distance from them ; by relieving the poor, employing the labourers, especially by instructing the ignorant, and helping as many as he could to heaven. He made that scripture his standing rule, and wrote it in the beginning of his book of accounts, Prov. iii. -9, 10, "Honour the Lord with thy substance," &c. And having set apart a day of secret prayer and humiliation, to beg of God a wise and an understanding heart, and to drop a tear, as he expresses it, "over the sins of his predecessors in that estate," he laid out himself very much in doing good. He was very serviceable upon all accounts in the neighbourhood ; and, though it took up a great deal of his time, and hindered him from his beloved studies, yet it might be said of him, as bishop Burnet said of Archbishop Tillotson, in his sermon at his funeral, that he "chose rather to live to the good of others than to himself ; and thought, that to do an act of charity, or even of tenderness and kindness, was of more value, both in itself and in the sight

of God, than to pursue the pompous parts of learning, how much soever his own genius might lead him to it."

He was very useful in the common concerns of the township and country, in which he was a very prudent counsellor. It was, indeed, a narrow sphere of activity, but, such as it was, "To him," (as to Job,) "men gave ear and waited, and kept silence at his counsel, after his words they spake not again:" and many of the neighbours, who respected him not as a minister, loved and honoured him as a knowing, prudent, and humble neighbour. In the concerns of private families he was very far from busying himself, and further from seeking his own interests; but he was very much engaged, advising many about their affairs, and the disposal of themselves and their children, arbitrating and composing differences between relations and neighbours, in which he had an excellent faculty, and often good success; inheriting the blessing entailed upon the peace-makers. References have been sometimes made to him by rule of Court, at the assizes, with consent of parties. He was very affable, and easy of access, and admirably patient in hearing every one's complaint; which he would answer with so much prudence and mildness, and give such apt advice, that many a time to consult with him, was to ask counsel at Abel, and so to end the matter. He observed, that in almost all quarrels, there was a fault on both sides; and that generally they were most in fault, who were most forward and clamorous in their complaints. One making her moan to him of a bad husband, that in this and the other instance was unkind: "And, sir," said she, after a long complaint, which he patiently heard, "what would you have me to do now?" "Why, truly," says he, "I would have you to go home, and be a better wife to him, and then you will find that he will be a better husband to you." Labouring to persuade one to forgive an injury that was done him, he urged this,

“Are you not a Christian?” And followed that argument so close, that at last he prevailed.

He was very industrious, and often successful, in persuading people to “recede from their right, for peace-sake;” and he would for that purpose tell them Luther’s story of the two goats, which met upon a narrow bridge over a deep water; they could not go back, and durst not fight; after a short parley, one of them lay down, and let the other go over him, and no harm was done. He would likewise relate a remarkable story, worthy to be here inserted, concerning a good friend of his, Mr. Thomas Yate, of Whitchurch, who in his youth was greatly wronged by an unjust uncle of his portion, which was two hundred pounds: when he grew up, his uncle shuffled with him, and would give him but forty pounds; and he had no way of recovering his right but by law; but before he would engage in that, he was willing to advise with his minister, the famous Dr. Twiss, of Newbury: the counsel he gave him, all things considered, was, for peace-sake, and for the preventing of sin, snares, and trouble, to take the forty pounds rather than contend; “And Thomas,” said the Doctor, “if thou dost so, assure thyself, that God will make it up to thee and thine some other way; and they that defraud thee will be the losers by it at last.” He did so; and it pleased God so to bless that little which he began the world with, that when he died in a good old age, he left his son possessed of some hundreds a year, and he that wronged him fell into decay.

Many very pious worthy families in the country would say of Mr. Henry, that they had no friend like-minded, who did naturally care for their state, and so affectionately sympathize with them, and in whom their hearts could safely trust. He was very charitable to the poor, and was full of alms-deeds, which he did, as is said of Tabitha, Acts ix. 36, not which he said he would do, or which he put others on to do: but



dispersing abroad and giving to the poor, seeking and rejoicing in opportunities of that kind. When he gave an alms for the body, he usually gave also a spiritual alms, some good word of counsel, reproof, instruction, or comfort, as there was occasion; and in accommodating these to the persons he spoke to, he had very great dexterity.

He was very forward to lend money freely, to any of his poor neighbours that had occasion, and would sometimes say, that in many cases there was more charity in lending than in giving, because it obliged the borrower both to honesty and industry.

Such was his prudence, patience, and peaceableness, that in all the time he was at Broad-Oak, he never sued any, nor ever was sued, but was instrumental in preventing many vexatious law-suits among his neighbours. He used to say, "There are four rules to be duly observed in going to law:—1. We must not go to law for trifles; as he did who said, he would rather spend a hundred pounds in law than lose a pennyworth of his right. 2. We must not be rash and hasty in it, but try all other means possible to compose differences; wherein he that yields most, as Abraham did to Lot, is the better man; and there is nothing lost by it in the end. 3. We must see that it be without malice or desire of revenge. If the undoing of our brother be the end of our going to law, as it is with many, it is certainly evil, and it speeds accordingly. 4. It must be with a disposition to peace, whenever it may be had, and an ear open to all overtures of that kind."

Four rules he sometimes gave to be observed in our converse with men: "Have communion with few; be familiar with one; deal justly with all; speak evil of none."

He made it the diversion of his vacant hours, to oversee his gardens and fields. His care of this kind was an act of charity to poor labourers whom he em-

ployed, a good example to his neighbours, and for the comfort of his family. While thus engaged, his time was excellently improved for spiritual purposes, by occasional meditations; hints of which there are often in his diary, as those who conversed with him had many in discourse. He used to say, that many Scripture-parables and similitudes are taken from the common actions of this life, that when our hands are employed about them, our hearts may the more easily pass through them to divine and heavenly things. I have heard him often blame those, whose irregular zeal in the profession of religion, makes them neglect their regular business, and let the house drop through; the affairs of which, the good man will order with discretion. He would tell sometimes how a pious woman was convinced of this her fault, by means of an intelligent godly neighbour; who, coming into the house, and finding the woman, far in the day, in her closet, and the house sadly neglected, said "What, is there no fear of God in this house?" which much startled and affected the good woman, who overheard him. He would often say, "Every thing is beautiful in its season, and that it is the wisdom of the prudent, so to order the duties of their general callings as Christians, and those of their particular callings in the world, as that they may not clash or interfere. I have observed it from Eccles. vii. 16. That there may be over-doing in well-doing."

I cannot omit one little passage in his diary, because it may be instructive. When he was desired to be bound for one that had, upon a particular occasion, been bound for him, he writes, "Solomon says, He that hateth suretyship is sure;" but he says also, "He that hath friends must shew himself friendly." But he always cautioned those that became sureties, not to be bound for more than they knew themselves able to pay, and would be willing to pay, if the principal failed.

He was very tender and compassionate towards poor strangers and travellers, though his candour and charity were often imposed upon by cheats and pretenders, whom he was not apt to be suspicious of; but would say in the most favourable sense, "Thou knowest not the heart of a stranger." If any asked his charity, whose representation of their case he did not like, or who he thought did amiss to take that course, he would first give them an alms, and then mildly reprove them; labouring to convince them that they were out of the way of duty, that they could not expect God should bless them in it; and would not chide, but reason with them. He would say, if he should tell them of their faults, and not give them an alms, the reproof would look only like an excuse to deny his charity, and would be rejected accordingly.

In a word, his greatest care about the things of this world was, how to do good with what he had, and to devise liberal things; desiring to make no other accession to his estate, but only that blessing which attends beneficence. He firmly believed (though it should seem few do) that what "is given to the poor, is lent to the Lord," who will pay it again, in kind or kindness; and that religion and piety is the best friend to outward prosperity, and he found it so; for it pleased God abundantly to bless his habitation, and to "make a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he had on every side." Though he did not delight himself in the abundance of wealth, yet, which is far better, he delighted himself in the abundance of peace. All that he had and did observably prospered, so that the country oftentimes called his family, "a family which the Lord had blessed." His comforts of this kind were (as he used to pray they might be) "oil to the wheels of his obedience," and in the use of those things he served the Lord his God with "joyfulness and gladness of heart;"

yet still mindful of, and "grieved for, the afflictions of Joseph." He would say sometimes, when he was in the midst of the comforts of this life, as that good man who exclaimed, 'All this, and heaven too! surely then we serve a good Master.' Thus did the Lord bless him, and make him a blessing; and this abundant grace, through the thanksgiving of many, redounded to the glory of God.

Having given this general account of his circumstances at Broad-Oak, we shall now go on with his story, especially as to the exercise of his ministry there, and thereabouts; for that was his business on which he was intent, and to which he wholly gave himself, taking other things by the bye. After his settlement at Broad-Oak, whenever there was preaching at Whitewell-chapel (as usually there was on saint's-days in the month) he constantly attended there with his family; was usually with the first, and reverently joined in the public service. He often invited the minister to dine with him; after dinner he sang a psalm, repeated the morning sermon, and prayed; and then attended in like manner in the afternoon. In the evening he preached to his own family; and perhaps two or three of his neighbours would drop in to him. On those Lord's-days when there was no preaching at the chapel, he spent the whole day at home; and many an excellent sermon he preached, when there were only four besides his own family, and perhaps not so many, according to the limitation of the conventicle-act.

In the time of trouble and distress, by the conventicle-act, in 1670, he kept private, and stirred little abroad, being loth to offend those who were in power, and judging it prudent to gather in his sails when the storm was violent. He then observed, as that which he was troubled at, "That there was a great deal of precious time lost among professors, when they came together, in discoursing of their adventures to meet,

and their escapes, which he feared tended more to set up self, than to give glory to God." Also in relating how they got together, and such a one preached, but little enquiring what spiritual benefit and advantage was reaped from it. He observed, we are apt to make the circumstances of our religious services, more the matter of our discourse, than the substance of them. His settled principle, which he took all occasions to mention, was, "In those things wherein all the people of God are agreed, I will spend my zeal; and wherein they differ, I will endeavour to walk according to the light which God hath given me, and charitably believe that others do so too."

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## CHAP. VI.

*His liberty by the indulgence in 1672, and thenceforwards, to the year 1681*

NOTWITHSTANDING the severe act against conventicles, in the year 1670, yet the nonconformists of London ventured to set up meetings in 1671, and were connived at; but in the countenance there was little liberty taken, till the King's declaration of March 15, 1671, gave countenance and encouragement to it. What were the secret springs that produced that declaration, time discovered;\* however, it was to the poor dissenters as life from the dead, and gave them some reviving in their bondage. But it was so precarious a liberty, that it should never be said, those people were hard to be pleased, who were so well pleased with that, and thanked God who put such a thing into the King's heart. The tenor of that declaration was this: "In consideration of the inefficacy of rigour, tried for

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\* To favour the Romanists.—ED.

divers years, and to invite strangers into the kingdom, ratifying the establishment of the Church of England, it suspends penal laws against all nonconformists and recusants, promiseth to licence separate places for meetings; limiting papists only to private-houses."

On this Mr. Henry writes, "It is a thing diversely resented, as men's interests lead them: the conformists displeased, the presbyterians glad, the independents very glad, the papists triumph. The danger is, lest the allowing of separate places help to overthrow our parish order, which God hath owned, and thus divisions and animosities rise among us, which every honest man would rather should be healed. We are put hereby into three difficulties, either to turn independents in practice, or to strike in with the conformists, or to sit down in former silence and sufferings (and silence he accounted one of the greatest sufferings) till the Lord shall open a more effectual door." That which (he says) he then heartily wished for, was "That those who were in place, would admit the sober nonconformists to preach sometimes occasionally in their pulpits by which means he thought prejudice would in time wear off on both sides, and they might mutually strengthen each others hands against the common enemy, the papists; who, he thought, would fish best in troubled waters." This he would choose, much rather than keep a separate meeting: but it could not be had; so, not so much as leave to preach in Whitewell chapel when it was vacant, as it often was, though it were three long miles from the parish church. He found that some people, the more they are courted, the more coy they are; however, the overtures he made to this purpose, and the slow steps he took about setting up a distinct congregation, yielded him satisfaction in the reflection, when he could say, we would have been united, and they would not.

It was several weeks after the declaration came out,

that he received a licence to preach, as Paul did, in his own house, and elsewhere, "no man forbidding him." This was procured for him by some of his friends at London, without his knowledge, and came to him altogether unexpectedly. The use he made of it was, that what he did before to his own family, and in private, the doors being shut for fear, he now did more publicly; opened his doors, and welcomed his neighbours, to partake of his spiritual things: only one sermon in the evening of the Lord's-day, when there was preaching at Whitewell chapel, where he still continued his attendance with his family and friends; but when there was not, he spent the whole day, at public time, in the proper services of it, exposition of the Scriptures read, and preaching, with prayer and praise. This he did gratuitously; receiving nothing for his labours, either at home or abroad, but the satisfaction of doing good to souls, which was his meat and drink, with the trouble and charge of entertaining many of his friends, which he did with much cheerfulness. He would say, he sometimes thought that the bread even multiplied in breaking, and he found that God abundantly blessed his provision, with that blessing, which as he used to say, "will make a little go a great way." He was wont to observe, for the encouragement of such as had meetings in their own houses, which sometimes drew upon them inconveniences, "That the ark is a guest, that always pays well for its entertainment." And he noted, that when Christ had borrowed Peter's boat to preach a sermon out of it, he presently repaid him for the loan with "a great draught of fishes."

He had many thoughts of heart concerning this use he made of the liberty, not knowing what would be in the end hereof; but after serious consideration, and many prayers, he saw his way very plain, and addressed himself with all diligence, to improve this gale of opportunity. Some had dismal apprehensions of

the issue of it; and that there would be an after-reckoning. "But," said he, "let us mind our duty, and let God alone to order events, which is his work, not ours."

It was a seasonable word, which he preached at that time for his own encouragement, and the encouragement of his friends, from Eccl. xi. 4. "He that observeth the wind shall not sow, and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap." Those that are minded either to do good, or get good, must not be frightened with seeming difficulties and discouragements. Our work is to sow and reap, to do good and get good; let us mind that, and let who will mind the winds and clouds. "A lion in the way, a lion in the streets;" a very unlikely place, he would say, for lions to be in, and yet it serves the sluggard for an excuse.

While this liberty lasted, he was "in labours more abundant;" many lectures he preached abroad in Shropshire, Cheshire, and Denbighshire, laying out himself exceedingly for the good of souls, spending and being spent in the work of the Lord. And of that neighbourhood, and of that time it was said, that "this and that man was born" again, then and there; and many there were who asked the way to Sion, with their faces thitherwards, and were not proselyted to a party, but savingly brought home to Jesus Christ. I mean this; such as had been vain and worldly, and careless, and unmindful of God and another world, became sober and serious, and concerned about their souls and a future state. This was the "conversion of souls," aimed at, and laboured after; and through grace, not altogether in vain. Whatever lectures were set up in the country round, it was still desired that Mr. Henry should begin them, which was thought no small encouragement to those who were to carry them on; and very happy he was, both in the choice and management of his subjects at such opportunities, seeking to find out acceptable words. Take



one specimen of his address, when he began a lecture with a sermon, on Heb. xii. 15: "I assure you, says he, and God is my witness, I am not come to preach, either sedition against the peace of the state, or schism against the peace of the church, by persuading you to this or that opinion or party; but as a minister of Christ, who has received mercy from the Lord to desire to be faithful, my errand is to exhort you to all possible seriousness, in the great business of your eternal salvation, according to my text; which, if the Lord will make as profitable to you, as it is material, and of weight in itself, neither you nor I shall have cause to repent our being here to-day; looking diligently, lest any of you fail of the grace of God. If it were the last sermon I were to preach, I know not how to take my aim better to do you good."

In doing this work, he often said, that he looked upon himself, but as an assistant to the parish-ministers, in promoting the common interests of Christ's kingdom, and the common salvation of precious souls, by the explication and application of those great truths, wherein we are all agreed. He would compare the case to that in Hezekiah's time, when the Levites helped the Priests to kill the sacrifices, which was something irregular, but the exigence of affairs called for it; the Priests being too few, and some of them not so careful as they should have been, to sanctify themselves. (2 Chron. xxix. 34.) Wherever he preached, he usually prayed for the parish-minister, and for a blessing upon his ministry. He has often said how well pleased he was, when, after he had preached a lecture at Oswestry, he went to visit the minister of the place, Mr. Edwards, a worthy good man; and told him, he had been sowing a handful of seed among his people; and had this answer, "That's well, the Lord prosper your seed and mine too! there is need enough of us both." And another worthy conformist that came privately to hear him,

but was reprimanded for it by his superiors, told him afterwards with tears, that "his heart was with him."

His heart was wonderfully enlarged in his work at this time ; and God remarkably owned him, setting many seals to his ministry, which much confirmed him in what he did. He has this observable passage in his diary, about this time, which he recorded for his after benefit, and the example of it may be instructive. "Remember, that if trouble should come hereafter, for what we do now in the use of present liberty, I neither shrink from it, nor sink under it ; for I do therein approve myself to God, and to my own conscience, in truth and uprightness ; and the Lord, whom I serve, can and will certainly, both bear me out, and bring me off with comfort in the end. I say, remember, and forget it not, this 24th day of March, 1672-3."

It was at the beginning of this liberty, that the society at Broad-Oak commenced ; made up, besides the neighbourhood, of some out of Whitchurch, and Whitchurch-parish, who had been Mr. Porter's people ; some out of Hanmer-parish, who had been Mr. Steele's, and some out of the parishes of Wem, Prees, and Ellesmere ; persons generally of very moderate and sober principles, quiet and peaceable lives, and hearty well-wishers to the King and government. They were not rigid or schismatical in their separation, but willing to attend, though sometimes with difficulty and hazard, upon those administrations which they found most lively, edifying, and helpful to them, in the great business of working out their salvation. To this society he would never call himself a pastor, nor was he willing they should call him so ; but a helper, and a minister of Christ for their good. He would say, "That he looked upon his family only as his charge, and his preaching to others was but accidental ; and if they came, he could no more turn

them away, than he could a poor hungry man, who came to his door for an alms. And being a minister of Jesus Christ, he thought himself bound to preach the gospel, as he had opportunity.

Usually once a month he administered the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. Some of his opportunities of that kind he sets a particular remark upon, as comfortable days, on which he found it good to draw near to God. When about the year's end there was a general expectation of the cancelling the indulgence, he has this note upon a "precious sabbath and sacrament-day," as he calls it; "Perhaps this may be the last; Father, thy will be done; it is good for us to be at such uncertainties, for now we receive our liberty from our Father, fresh every day, which is the sweetest of all."

In the years 1677, 1678, and 1679, in the course of his ministry at Broad-Oak, he preached over the Ten Commandments, and largely opened from other texts of scripture the duties required, and sins forbidden, in each commandment. For, though none delighted more in preaching Christ and gospel-grace, yet he knew, that Christ came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil them; and that, though we are not under the law, as a covenant, yet we are under it as a rule; under a law to Christ. He was very large and particular in pressing second-table duties, as essential to Christianity. We have known those, said he, that have called preaching on such subjects, good moral preaching; but let them call it as they will, I am sure it is necessary, and as much now as ever." How earnestly would he press the necessity of righteousness and honesty, in the whole conduct. "A good Christian, (he used to say,) will be a good husband, a good father, a good master, a good subject, a good neighbour, and so on in other relations." How often would he urge to this purpose, that it is the will and command of the great God,—the character of all the citizens

of Sion,—the beauty and ornament of our Christian profession,—and the surest way to thrive and prosper in the world. “Honesty is the best policy.” He would say, that these are things in which the children of this world are competent judges. They that know not what belongs to faith and repentance, and prayer, yet know what belongs to making an honest bargain : they are the parties concerned, and oftentimes are themselves careful in those things ; and therefore those who profess religion, should walk very circumspectly, that the name of God and his doctrine should not be blasphemed, nor religion wounded through their sides. Thus he preached, and his constant practice was a comment upon it. He was more than ordinarily enlarged in urging his hearers to “speak evil of no man,” from Tit. iii. 2. If we can say no good of persons, we must say nothing of them. He gave it as a rule, “Never to speak of any one’s faults to others, till we have first spoken of them to the offender himself.” He was himself an eminent example of this rule. Some that conversed much with him, have said, that they never heard him speak evil of any one ; nor could he bear to hear any spoken evil of, but often drove away a backbiting tongue with an angry countenance. He was known to be as faithful a patron of offenders before others, as he was a faithful reprover of them to themselves.

Whenever he preached on moral duties, he would always have something of Christ in his sermon ; either his life, as the great pattern of his duty ; or his love, as the great motive to it ; or his merit, as making atonement for the neglect of it.

In the year 1680, he preached on the doctrines of faith and repentance, from several texts of Scripture. He used to say, that he had been told concerning the famous Mr. Dod, that some called him in scorn, “Faith and repentance,” because he insisted so much

upon these two, in his preaching. "But," said he, "if this be to be vile, I will yet be more vile, for faith and repentance are all in all in Christianity." Concerning repentance he has sometimes said, "If I were to die in the pulpit, I would desire to die preaching repentance; and if I die 'bout of the pulpit, I would desire to die practising it." And he had often this saying concerning it: "He that repents every day, for the sins of every day, will, when he comes to die, have but the sins of one day to repent of. Even reckonings make long friends."

That year also, and the year 1681, he preached on the duties of hearing the word and prayer; of the former, from the parable of the sower; of the latter, from the Lord's Prayer. He looked upon the Lord's Prayer, to be not only a directory or pattern for prayer, but proper to be used as a form; and accordingly he used it, both in public and in his family. He thought it was an error on the one hand, to lay so much stress upon it, as some do, who think no solemn prayer accepted, nor any solemn ordinance or administration of worship complete without it. He thought it an error on the other hand not to use it at all: for it is a prayer, a compendious, comprehensive prayer, and may be of use to us, at least as much as other Scripture Prayers. But he thought it a much greater error to be angry at those that do use it, to judge and censure them, and for no other reason to conceive prejudices against them and their ministry. "A great strait, says he, poor ministers are in, when some will not hear them, if they do not use the Lord's Prayer, and others will not hear them if they do. What is to be done in this case? We must walk according to the light we have, and approve ourselves to God, either in using or not using it, and wait for the day when God will mend the matter; which I hope he will do in his own time."

He was in the close of his exposition of the Lord's Prayer, when a dark cloud was brought upon his assemblies, and he was necessitated to contract his public labours.

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## CHAP. VII.

*The rebukes he lay under at Broad-Oak, betwixt the years 1680, and 1687.*

In the beginning of the year 1681, in April and May, the country was greatly afflicted by an extreme drought: some serious people proposed that there should be some time set apart for fasting and prayer, in a solemn assembly upon this occasion. The connivance of authority was presumed upon, because no disturbance of meetings was heard of at London, or any where else. Mr. Henry was desired to come and give his assistance at that day's work. He asked, upon what terms they stood with the neighbouring justices; and, it was answered, "Well enough." The drought continued in extremity: some that had not used to come to such meetings, came thither, upon the apprehension they had of the threatening judgment, which the country was under. Mr. Henry prayed and preached on Psalm lxvi. 18. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me;" whence his doctrine was, that "Iniquity regarded in the heart, will certainly spoil the success of prayer." When he was in the midst of his sermon, closely applying this truth, Sir T. V. of Hodnet, and Mr. M. of Ightfield, two justices of the peace for Shropshire, with several others of their retinue, came suddenly upon them, disturbed them, set guards upon the house-door, and came in themselves; severally rallied all they knew, reflected upon the House of Commons, and the vote they had passed, concerning the present unseasonableness

of putting the laws in execution against Protestant dissenters, as if in so voting, they had acted beyond their sphere, as they did, who took away the life of King Charles. They diverted themselves with very abusive and unbecoming talk, swearing, cursing, and reviling bitterly. Being told the occasion of the meeting was to seek to "turn away the anger of God from us" in this present drought, it was answered, "Such meetings as these were the cause of God's anger." While they were thus entertaining themselves, their clerks took the names of those that attended, in all, about one hundred and fifty, and so dismissed them for the present. Mr. Henry has noted, in the account he kept of this event, that the justices came to this work, from the ale-house upon Prees-heath, about two miles off, to which, and the bowling-green adjoining, they with other justices, gentlemen, and clergymen of the neighbourhood, had long before obliged themselves to come every Tuesday, during the summer-time, under the penalty of twelve-pence a time if they were absent; and there to spend the day in drinking and bowling. This was thought to be as much more to the dishonour of God, and the scandal of the Christian profession, as cursing, swearing, and drunkenness, are worse than praying, singing Psalms, and hearing the word of God. After the feat done, they returned to the ale-house, and made themselves and their companions merry with calling over the names they had taken, making their reflections as they saw cause, and recounting the particulars of the exploit. There was one of the company, whose wife happened to be present at the meeting, and her name taken among the rest: when they upbraided him with this, he answered, that she had been better employed than he, and if Mr. Henry might be admitted to preach in a church, "he would go a great many miles to hear him." For these words he was forthwith expelled their company, and never more allowed to shew his face

at that bowling-green ; to which he replied, If they had so ordered long ago, it had been a great deal better for him and his family. Two days after, they met at Hodnet, where, upon the oath of two witnesses, who, it was supposed, were sent on purpose to inform, they signed and sealed two records of conviction. By one record they convicted the master of the house, and fined him twenty pounds, and five pounds more as a constable of the town that year ; and with him all the persons present, whose names they had taken, and fined them five shillings each, and issued out warrants accordingly. By another record, they convicted the two ministers, Mr. Bury, and Mr. Henry. The act makes it only punishable to "preach or teach" in any such conventicle ; and yet they fined Mr. Bury twenty pounds, though he only prayed, and did not speak one word in the way either of preaching or teaching, not so much as "Let us pray : " however, they said, "Praying was teaching," and right or wrong, he must be fined ; though his great piety, peaceableness, and usefulness, besides his deep poverty, might have pleaded for him, against so palpable an act of injustice. They took seven pounds from him, and laid it upon others, as they saw cause ; and, for the remaining thirteen pounds, he being utterly unable to pay it, they took from him, by distress, the bed which he lay upon, with blanket and rug ; also another feather bed, nineteen pair of sheets, most of them new ; of which he could not prevail to have one pair returned for him to lie in ; also books, to the value of five pounds, besides brass and pewter. And though he was at this time perfectly innocent of that heinous crime of "preaching and teaching," with which he was charged, yet he had no way to right himself, but by appealing to the justices themselves in quarter-sessions, who would be sure to affirm their own decrees, as the justices in Montgomeryshire had done not long before in a like case, especially when



it was to recover to themselves treble costs. So the good man sat down with his loss, and "took joyfully the spoiling of his goods; knowing in himself, that he had in heaven a better, and an enduring substance."

But Mr. Henry, being the greatest criminal, and having done the most mischief, was fined forty pounds. The pretence of which was this: in the year 1679, Oct. 15, Mr. Kynaston, of Oatly, a justice of peace in Shropshire, meeting him and some others coming, as he supposed, from a conventicle, was pleased to record their conviction, "upon the notorious evidence and circumstance of the fact." The record was filed at Shrewsbury the next Sessions; but no notice was sent of it, either to Mr. Henry, or the justices of Flintshire; nor any prosecution upon it, against any of the parties; the reason of which Mr. Henry, in a narrative he wrote of this affair, supposes to be, not only the then favourable posture of public affairs towards dissenters, but also the particular prudence and lenity of Mr. Kynaston, so that having never smarted for this, he could not be supposed to be deterred from the like offence; nor, if he were wronged in that first conviction, had he ever any opportunity of making his appeal. However, the justices thought that first record sufficient to give denomination to a second offence, and so he came to be fined double. This conviction, according to the direction of the act, they certified to the next adjoining justices of Flintshire, who had carried themselves with great temper and moderation towards Mr. Henry, and never given him any disturbance; though, if they had been so minded, they had not wanted opportunities; but they were now necessitated to execute the sentences of the Shropshire justices. He was much pressed to pay the fine, which might prevent his own loss, and the justices trouble. But he was not willing to do it; partly because he would not encourage such prosecutions, nor voluntarily reward the informers for that, which he thought they should rather be punished

for ; and partly, because he thought himself wronged in the doubling of the fine. Whereupon his goods were distrained upon and carried away. As the warrant gave them no authority to break open doors, nor their watchfulness any opportunity to enter the house, they carried away thirty-three cart-loads of goods without doors, corn cut upon the ground, hay, coals, &c. This made a great noise in the country, and raised the indignation of many, against the decrees which prescribed this grievousness ; while Mr. Henry bore it with his usual evenness and serenity of mind. He did not boast of his sufferings, or make any great matter of them ; but would often say, " Alas, this is nothing to what others suffer, nor to what we ourselves may suffer before we die : " and yet he rejoiced and blessed God that it was not for debt, nor for evil doing, that his goods were carried away. And, says he, " While it is for well-doing that we suffer, they cannot harm us." Thus he writes in his diary upon it, " How oft have we said that changes are at the door, but, blessed be God, there is no sting in this." He frequently expressed the assurance he had, that, whatever damage he sustained, " God is able to make it up again : " and, as he used to say, though we may be losers for Christ, we shall not be losers by him in the end. He had often said, that his preaching was likely to do the most good when it was sealed by suffering ; and, " if this be the time (says he) welcome the will of God ; even this also shall turn to the furtherance of the gospel of Christ."

Soon after this, was the assizes for Flintshire, held at Mold, where Sir George Jeffries, then chief-justice of Chester, afterwards Lord Chancellor, sat judge. He did not in private conversation seem to applaud what was done in this matter, as was expected ; whether out of a private pique against some that had been active in it, or for what other reason is not known ; but it was said that he pleasantly asked some of the gentlemen, by

what new law they pressed carts, as they passed along the road, to carry away goods distrained for a conventicle? It was also said, that he spoke with some respect of Mr. Henry; saying, he knew him and his character well, that he was a great friend of his mother, Mrs. Jeffries, of "Acton, near Wrexham, a very pious woman; and that sometimes, at his mother's request, Mr. Henry had examined him in his learning, when he was a school-boy, and commended his proficiency. It was much wondered at by many, that of all the times Sir George Jeffries went that circuit, though it is well known what was his temper, and the temper of that time, he never sought any occasion against Mr. Henry, nor took the occasions that were offered, nor countenanced any trouble intended him, though he was the only nonconformist minister in Flintshire.

Mr. Henry, at the next assizes after he was distrained upon, was presented by one of the high constables: 1. for "keeping a conventicle at his house;" and 2. for saying, "That the law for suppressing conventicles ought not to be obeyed, and that there was never a tittle of the word of God in it." The latter presentment was altogether false. He had, indeed, in discourse with the high constable, when he insisted so much upon the law, which required him to be so rigorous in the prosecution, objected, that "All human laws were not to be obeyed, merely because they were laws." But as to any such reflections upon the law he suffered by, he was far from it, and had prudence enough to keep silence at that time; for it was an evil time, when so many were made "offenders for a word." But these presentments met with so little countenance from Judge Jeffries, that Mr. Henry only entered his appearance in the prothonotary's office, and they were no more heard of; wherein he acknowledged the hand of God, who turneth the hearts of men; "as the rivers of water."

In the same year, 1681, happened a public discourse at Oswestry, between Dr. William Lloyd, then bishop of St. Asaph, afterwards bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, and some nonconformist ministers, of whom Mr. Henry was one.

Mr. Henry, who was utterly a stranger to the bishop, pressed hard to have had the discourse in private, before a select number; but it would not be granted. He also desired his lordship, that it might not be expected from him, being of another diocese, to concern himself in the discourse, but only as a hearer: "Nay, Mr. Henry (said the bishop), it is not the concern of my diocese alone, but it is the common cause of religion; and therefore I expect you should interest yourself in it, more than as a hearer." His lordship was pleased to promise, that nothing which should be said by way of argument, should be any way turned to the prejudice of the disputants, nor any advantage be taken of it to give them trouble. There were present divers of the clergy and gentry of the country, with the magistrates of the town, and a great number of people; if this could have been avoided, it would have been preferred by Mr. Henry, who never loved any thing that made a noise, being herein like his Master, who did "not strive nor cry." The discourse began about two o'clock in the afternoon, and continued till between seven and eight at night. It was managed with a great deal of liberty, and not under the strict laws of disputation, which made it hard to give any tolerable account of the particulars of it. The arguments on both sides, may better be fetched from books written on the subject, than from such a discourse. The bishop managed his part of the conference with a great deal of gravity, calmness, and evenness of spirit; and therein gave an excellent pattern to all in such stations. Mr. Henry's remark upon this affair in his diary is this: "That whereas many reports went abroad far and near concerning it, every one passing his judgment upon the

result of it as he stood affected; for my own part, upon reflection, I find I have great reason to be ashamed of my manifold infirmities and imperfections; and yet do bless God, that seeing I could manage it no better, to do the truth more service, there was not more said and done to its disservice; to God be glory." Some who were adversaries to the cause Mr. Henry pleaded, though they were not convinced by his arguments, yet by his great meekness and humility, and that truly christian spirit which appeared so evidently in the whole management, were brought to have a better opinion of him, and the way in which he walked.

The conference broke off a little abruptly; the bishop and Mr. Henry, being somewhat close at an argument, in the recapitulation of what had been discoursed of, Mr. Jonathan Roberts whispered to Mr. Henry, "Pray, let my lord have the last word." A justice of peace upon the bench over-hearing this, presently replied, "You say my lord shall have the last word, but he shall not, for I will; we thank God we have the sword of power in our hands, and by the grace of God we will keep it, and it shall not rust; and I hope every lawful magistrate will do as I do; and look to yourselves, gentlemen, by the grace of God I will root you out of the country." To which a forward man in the crowd said, "Amen, throw them down stairs." This the bishop heard with silence, but the mayor of the town took order for their safety.

Two days after this discourse, the bishop wrote a very obliging letter to Mr. Henry, to signify how very much he was pleased with the good temper and spirit that he found in him at Oswestry; that he looked upon him, as one that intended well; but laboured under prejudices; and desired further acquaintance and conversation with him; particularly that he would come to him immediately at Wrexham. About three months after, he sent for him to Chester; in both which interviews a great deal of discourse, with much free-

dom, passed between them in private, in which they seemed to vie in nothing more than in candour and obligingness, shewing to each other all meekness. The bishop was pleased to shew him his plan for the government of his diocese, and the method he intended to take in church-censures : this Mr. Henry very well approved of ; but pleasantly told his lordship, he hoped he would take care that Juvenal's verse should not be again verified :

“ Clipt the dove's wings, and gave the vulture's course.”

DRYDEN.

which the bishop smiled at, and told him, he would take care it should not. His lordship, observing his true catholic charity and moderation, told him he did not look upon him as a schismatic ; but only as a separatist ; and that if he were in his diocese, he did not question but he should find out some way to make him useful. But all his reasonings could not satisfy Mr. Henry's conscience of the lawfulness of being re-ordained and conforming. The bishop, for some years after, when he came that way towards London, either called on Mr. Henry at his house, or sent for him to Whitchurch, and still with all expressions of friendship.

The trouble which Mr. Henry was in, about the meeting at Weston, obliged him for awhile, to keep his sabbaths privately at home ; but in the year 1682, he took a greater liberty, and many flocked to him on Lord's-days, through the kind connivance of neighbouring magistrates. But in the year 1683, when the meetings were generally suppressed through the kingdom, he was again necessitated to act more privately, and confine his labours more to his own family, and his friends that visited him. He continued his attendance at Whitewell-chapel as usual ; and when he was abridged of his liberty, he often blessed God for his quietness. Once when the curate preached a bitter sermon against dissenters, on a Lord's-day morning,

some wondered that Mr. Henry would go again in the afternoon, for the second part. "But (says he), if he doth not know his duty, I know mine; and I bless God, I can find honey in a carcass."

In this time of "treading down, and of perplexity," he stirred little abroad; being forced, as he used to express it, "to throw the plough under the hedge;" but he preached constantly at home, without disturbance. He often comforted himself with this, "When we cannot do what we would, if we do what we can, God will accept of us; when we cannot keep open shop, we must drive a secret trade." And he would say, "There is a mean, if we could hit it, between fool-hardiness and faint-heartedness." While he had some opportunity of being useful at home, he was afraid he should prejudice that by venturing abroad. One of his friends in London, earnestly soliciting him to make a visit thither in this time of restraint in the country, he thus wrote to him—"I should be glad once more to kiss my native soil, though it were but with a kiss of valediction: but my indisposedness to travel, and the small prospect there is of doing good to countervail the pains, are my prevailing arguments against it. I am here, it is true, buried alive; but I am quiet in my grave, and have no mind to be a walking ghost. We rejoice, and desire to be thankful, that God hath given us a home; and continued it to us, when so many, better than we, have not where to lay their head, having no certain dwelling-place. (It was at the time of the dispersion of the French Protestants.) Why are they exiles, and not we? They strangers in a strange land, and not we? We must not say, we will die in our nests, lest God say, nay; nor, we will multiply our days as the sand, lest God say, this night, &c. Our times and all our ways are at his disposal, absolutely and universally; and it is very well they are so."

At the time of the duke of Monmouth's descent,

and the insurrection in the West, in the year 1685, Mr. Henry, as many others, pursuant to a general order of the lord-licutenant, for securing all suspected persons, and particularly all nonconformist ministers, was taken up by a warrant from the deputy-licutenants, and sent under a guard to Chester castle, where he was about three weeks a close prisoner. He was lodged with some gentlemen and ministers that were brought thither out of Lancashire, who were all strangers to him ; but he had great comfort in the acquaintance and society of many of them.

He often spoke of this imprisonment, not as matter of complaint, but of thanksgiving ; and blessed God he was “ in nothing uneasy all the while.” In a sermon to his family, the day after he came home, he largely and affectionately recounted the mercies of that providence : as for instance, “ That his imprisonment was for no ill cause : it is guilt that makes a prison. That it was his security in a dangerous time. That he had good company in his sufferings, who prayed and read the scriptures together, and discoursed to their mutual edification. That he had health there ; not “ sick, and in prison.” That he was visited and prayed for by his friends. That he was very cheerful and easy in his spirit ; many a time asleep and quiet, when his adversaries were disturbed and unquiet. That his enlargement was speedy and unsought for ; and that it gave occasion to the magistrates who committed him, to give it under their hands, that they had nothing in particular to lay to his charge ; and especially that it was without a snare, which was the thing he feared more than any thing else.

It was a surprise to some who visited him in his imprisonment, and were big with expectations of the duke of Monmouth's success, to hear him say, “ I would not have you flatter yourselves with such hopes, for God will not do his work for us in these nations by



that man; but our deliverance and salvation will arise some other way."

It must not be forgotten how ready, yea, studious and industrious, he was, to serve and oblige those who had been any way instruments of trouble to him, as far as he had power and opportunity; so well had he learnt that great lesson of forgiving and loving enemies; of this it were easy to give instances. When a gentleman, who had sometimes been an instrument of trouble to him, had occasion to make use of his help to give him light into a cause he had to be tried, Mr. Henry was very ready to serve him; and though he might have declined it, and it was somewhat against his own interest too, yet he appeared as a witness for him; which so won upon the gentleman, that he was afterwards more friendly to him. Mentioning in his diary the death of a gentleman in Shropshire, he notes, that he had been his professed enemy; but, says he, "God knows, I have often prayed for him."

Some have wondered to see in how courteous and friendly a manner he would speak to such as had been any way injurious to him, when he met with them; being as industrious to manifest his forgiveness of wrongs, as some are to discover their resentment of them. It was said of Archbishop Cranmer, that the way to have him one's friend, was to do him an unkindness; and it might be said of Mr. Henry, that doing him an unkindness would not make him one's enemy. This reminds me of an exemplary passage, concerning his worthy friend, Mr. Edward Lawrence: once going with some of his sons, by the house of a gentleman who had been injurious to him, he charged them, that they should never think or speak aniss of that gentleman for the sake of any thing he had done against him; but whenever they went by his house, should lift up their hearts in prayer to God for him and

his family. And who is he that will harm those, who are thus followers of Him that is good, in his goodness? It is almost the only temporal promise in the New Testament, which is made to the meek, Mat. v. 5, that "they shall inherit the earth;" the meaning whereof, Dr. Hammond, in his Practical Catechism, takes to be especially this, "That in the ordinary dispensation of God's providence, the most mild and quiet people are most free from disturbance. Those only have every man's hand against them, who have theirs against every man."

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## CHAP. VIII.

*The last Nine Years of his Life, in Liberty and Enlargement, at Broud-Oak, from the year 1687.*

IN the latter end of the year 1685, when the stream ran so very strong against the dissenters, Mr. Henry, being in discourse with a very great man of the church of England, mentioned King Charles's indulgence in 1672, as that which gave rise to his stated preaching in a separate assembly; and added, if the present king James should in like manner give me leave, I would do the same again: to which that great man replied, "Never expect any such thing from him; for take my word for it, he hates you nonconformists in his heart." "Truly (said Mr. Henry) I believe it, and I think he doth not love you of the church of England neither." It was then little thought, that this right reverend person should have the honour, as he had soon after, to be one of the seven bishops committed to the tower by king James; as it was also far from any one's expectation, that the said king James should so quickly give liberty to the nonconformists. But we live in a world, wherein we are to think nothing strange; nor be surprised at any turn of the wheel, or "course of nature," as it is called, James iii. 6.

The measures then taken by king James's court and council were soon laid open, not only to view, but to contempt; being in a short time, by the overruling providence of God, broken and defeated. However, the indulgence granted to dissenters in April, 1687, must needs be a reviving to those, who for so many years had lain buried in silence and restraint. None who will suppose the case their own, can wonder that they should rejoice in it; though the design of it being manifest, they could not but "rejoice with trembling." Mr. Henry's sentiments of it were, "Whatever men's ends are in it, I believe God's end in it is to do us good."

Many said, Surely the dissenters will not embrace the liberty which is intended only for a snare to them. Mr. Henry read and considered the Letter of Advice to the Dissenters, at that juncture; but concluded; "Duty is ours, and events are God's." He remembered the experience he had had of the like in king Charles's time; and that it did good, and no hurt; and why might not this do so too? "All power is for edification, not for destruction." Did Jeremiah sit still in the court of the prison, because he had his discharge from the King of Babylon? Nay, did not Paul, when he was presented by his countrymen for preaching the gospel, appeal to Cæsar, and find more kindness at Rome than he did at Jerusalem? In short, the principle of his "conversation in the world" being not fleshy wisdom, or policy, but the grace of God," and particularly the grace of "simplicity and godly sincerity," he was willing to make the best of that which was, and to hope the best of the design and issue of it. Doubtless it was intended to introduce popery; but it is certain that nothing could arm people against popery more effectually, than the plain and powerful preaching of the gospel; and thus they who granted that liberty, were out-shot in their own bow, which manifestly appeared in the event. And as

those did good service to the Protestant religion among scholars, who wrote so many learned books against popery at that time, so those ministers did no less service among the common people, who are the strength and body of the nation, that preached so many good sermons to arm their hearts against that strong delusion : this Mr. Henry took all occasions to do, as the rest of the nonconformists generally did. How often would he commend his hearers, as Dr. Holland, divinity-professor in Oxford, was wont to do, "to the love of God, and the hatred of popery!"

Besides his preaching professedly to discover the errors and corruptions of the Church of Rome, which he would have taken occasion to do more fully, had he seen those he preached to, in any immediate danger of the infection, there could not be a more effectual antidote against popery, than instructing and confirming of people in the truth, as it is in Jesus; and advancing the knowledge of, and a value and veneration for, the Holy Scriptures; to which, how much Mr. Henry in his place did contribute, all that knew him will bear record. He used to observe, that the fall of Babylon followed, upon the free and open preaching of the everlasting gospel, Rev. xiv. 6—8. He apprehended this liberty likely to be of very short continuance, and to end in trouble. He thought, that his not using it, would not help to prevent the trouble; but, that his vigorous improvement of it would help to prepare for the trouble; therefore he set himself with all diligence, to make the best use of this gleam, both at home and abroad, on Sabbath-days, and week-days, to his power, yea, and beyond his power.

The great subject of debate at this time in the nation, was concerning the repeal of penal laws and tests. Mr. Henry's thoughts were, that if those against the dissenters were all repealed, he would rejoice in it, and be very thankful both to God and man; for he would sometimes say, without reflection upon

any, he could not but look upon them as a national sin : as for those against the papists, if our lawgivers see cause to repeal them in a regular way, I will endeavour, said he, to make the best of it, and to say, " The will of the Lord be done."

When King James came in his progress into that country, in September 1687, to court the compliments of the people, Mr. Henry joined with several others, in and about Whitchurch, Nantwich, and Wem, in an address to him, which was presented when he lay at Whitchurch ; the purport of which was, not to sacrifice their lives and fortunes to him and to his interest, but only to return him thanks for the liberty they had, with a promise to demean themselves quietly in the use of it.

Some time after, commissioners were sent into the country, to enquire after the trouble that dissenters had sustained by the penal laws ; and how the money that was levied upon them was disposed of ; little of it being paid into the Exchequer. They sent to Mr. Henry to have an account of his sufferings : he returned answer by letter, that he had indeed been fined some years before, for a conventicle, distrained upon, and his goods carried away, which all the country knew, and to which he referred himself. But being required particularly to give account of it upon oath, he said though he could be glad to see such instruments of trouble legally removed, yet he declined giving any further information concerning it ; having, as he wrote to the commissioners, " long since, from his heart, forgiven all the agents, instruments, and occasions of it ; and having purposed never to say any thing more of it."

It was on Tuesday, June 14, 1681, that he was disturbed at Weston, in Shropshire, when he was preaching on Psalm lxvi. 18 ; and on Tuesday, June 14, 1687, that day six years, he preached there again without disturbance, finishing what he was then prevented

from delivering, concerning prayer and thanksgiving, from verses 19, 20, "But verily God hath heard me,—blessed be God!"—This seventh year of their silence and restraint proved, through God's wonderful good providence, the year of release.

In May 1688, a new commission of the peace came down from the county of Flint, in which, by whose interest or procurement was not known, Mr. Henry was nominated a justice of peace for that county. It was no small surprise to him, to receive a letter from the clerk of the peace, directed to Philip Henry, Esquire, acquainting him with it, and appointing him when and where to come to be sworn. To which he returned answer, that he was very sensible of his unworthiness of the honour, and unfitness for the office which he was nominated to, and therefore desired to be excused: he was so, and did what he could, that it might not be spoken of in the country.

For two years after this liberty began, Mr. Henry continued his attendance at Whitewell chapel; and preached at his own house, only when there was no supply there, and in the evening of those days when there was. For doing thus, he was greatly clamoured against, by some of the rigid separatists, and called a dissembler, and one that halted between two, and the like. Thus, as he notes in his diary, one side told him he was the author of all the mischief in the country, in drawing people from the church; and the other side told him he was the author of all the mischief, in drawing people to the church: and "which of these (said he) shall I seek to please? Lord, neither, but thyself alone, and my own conscience; and while I can do that, I have enough."

In a sermon at Whitewell chapel, one Lord's-day in the afternoon, where he, his family, and many of his congregation were attending, much was said, with some keen reflections, to prove the dissenters

schismatics, and in a damnable state. When he came immediately after to preach at his own house, before he began his sermon, he expressed himself to this purpose: "Perhaps some of you may expect now, that I should say something in answer to what we have heard, by which we have been so severely charged; but truly, I have something else to do;" and so, without any further notice taken of it, went on to preach "Jesus Christ and him crucified."

It was with some fear and trembling that Mr. Henry received the tidings of the Prince of Orange's landing, November 5, 1688, as being somewhat in the dark concerning the clearness of his call, and dreading what might be the consequence of it. He used to say, "Give peace in our time, O Lord," was a prayer that he would heartily say his Amen to. But when secret things were brought to light, and a regular course was taken to fill the vacant throne with such a King and Queen, none rejoiced in it more heartily than he did. He celebrated the national thanksgiving for that great deliverance, with a sermon on that text, Rom. viii. 31, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Soon after that happy settlement, there were overtures made towards a comprehension of the moderate dissenters with the Church of England. This Mr. Henry most earnestly desired, if it could be had upon any terms less than sinning against his conscience; for never was any more averse to that which looked like a separation than he was, if he could possibly have helped it. His prayers were constant, and his endeavours as he had opportunity, that there might be some healing methods found out and agreed upon. But it is well known what was the cry of the clergy at that time. That forasmuch as the oaths, subscriptions, and ceremonies, were imposed only to keep out such men, they would never consent to their removal, to let them in again. This temper and

resolve, so contrary to what might have been expected, upon that happy and glorious revolution, did a little alter his sentiments in that matter; and he saw himself perfectly driven from them. Despairing, therefore, to see an accommodation, he set himself the more vigorously to improve the present liberty. In June, 1689, the act of indulgence passed, which not only tolerated, but allowed dissenters' meetings, and took them under the protection of the government.

Soon after which, as the ministers that preached at Whitewell chapel were uncertain in their coming, which kept his meeting at Broad-Oak at like uncertainties, to the frequent disappointment of many of his hearers that came from far, he was at last prevailed on to preach, at public time, every Lord's day: this he continued to do while he lived, much to his own satisfaction, and the satisfaction of his friends; yet he never in the least changed his judgment, as to the lawfulness of joining in the Common-prayer, but was still ready to do it occasionally.

It may be of use to give some account how he managed his ministerial work in the latter part of his time, wherein he had as signal tokens of the presence of God with him as ever; enabling him to "bring forth fruit in old age." Though what he did, he still did gratuitously, and would do so, yet he was not willing to have any constant assistance, nor had he any; so much was he in his element, when he was about his Master's work: it was his meat and drink to do it.

1. As to his constant Sabbath-work, he was uniform, and abundant in it. He began his morning family worship on the Lord's days at eight o'clock, when he read and expounded pretty largely, sang a psalm, and prayed; and many strove to come time enough to join with him in that service. He began in public just at nine o'clock, winter and summer. His meeting-place was an out-building of his own, near his house, fitted up very decently and conveniently for the purpose.



He began with prayer, then he sang the 100th Psalm, without reading the lines; next he read and expounded a chapter in the Old Testament in the morning, and the New Testament in the afternoon. He looked upon the public reading of the Scriptures in religious assemblies, to be an ordinance of God; and that it tended very much to the edification of people, to have what is read expounded to them. The bare reading of the word he used to compare to the throwing of a net into the water; but the expounding of it, is like the spreading out of that net, which makes it the more likely to catch fish; especially as he managed it with practical profitable observations. Some that have heard him read a chapter with this thought, how will he make such a chapter as this useful to us, have been surprised with such pertinent useful instructions, as they have owned to be as much for their edification as any sermon. And commonly when he had expounded a chapter, he would desire them when they came home, to read it over, and recollect some of those things that had been spoken to them out of it.

In expounding the Old Testament, he industriously sought for something in it concerning Christ. Take one instance: the last Sabbath that he spent with his children at Chester, in the public morning worship, he read and expounded the last chapter of Job: after he had gone through the chapter, and observed what he thought fit out of it, he expressed himself to this purpose: "When I have read a chapter in the Old Testament, I then enquire what there is in it that points at Christ, or is any way applicable to him. Here is in this chapter a great deal of Job; but is there nothing of Christ here? Yes; you have heard of the patience of Job, and have in him seen the end of the Lord. This in Job is applicable to Christ, that after he had patiently gone through his sufferings, he was appointed an intercessor for his unkind friends." ver. 8, Go to my servant Job, and my servant Job shall

pray for you, for him will I accept. "If any one hath an errand to God, let him go to Jesus Christ, and put it into his hand; for there is no acceptance to be hoped for with God, but by him, who is his beloved Son; not only *with* whom he is well pleased, but *in* whom, namely, with us in him: he hath made us accepted in the Beloved."

After the exposition of the chapter he sang a psalm, and commonly chose a psalm suitable to it, and would briefly tell his hearers how they might sing that psalm with understanding, and what affections of soul should be working towards God, in singing it; his hints of that kind were of great use, and contributed much to the right performance of that service. He often said, "The more singing of psalms there is in our families and congregations, on Sabbath-days, the more like they are to heaven, and the more there is in them of the everlasting sabbath."

After the sermon in the morning, he sang the 117th Psalm, without reading the lines. He intermitted at noon about an hour and a half, and on sacrament-days not so long; in which time he only took a little refreshment in his study, yet many of his friends partook of his temporal as well as spiritual things; as those did that followed Christ, of whom he was careful lest they should "faint by the way." The morning sermon was repeated, by a ready writer, to those that stayed in the meeting-place, as many did, and when that was done, he began the afternoon exercise; in which he not only read and expounded a chapter, but catechized the children, and expounded the catechism briefly before sermon. Thus did he go "from strength to strength," and from duty to duty, on Sabbath-days, running the ways of God's commandments with an enlarged heart. The variety and vivacity of his public services, made them exceedingly pleasant to all that joined with him, who never had cause to complain of his being tedious. He used to say, "Every minute of

sabbath-time is precious, and none of it is to be lost ;” and that he scarcely thought the Lord’s day well spent, if he were not weary in body at night ; wearied *with* his work, but not weary *of* it, as he used to distinguish. He would sometimes say to those about him, when he had gone through the duties of a sabbath, “ Well, if this be not the way to heaven, I do not know what is.” In pressing people to number their days, he would especially exhort them to number their Sabbath-days ; how many they have been, how ill they have been spent, how few may remain, that they may be spent better : and to help in the account he would say, that “ For every twenty years of our lives, we enjoy above a thousand sabbaths,” which must all be accounted for in the day of reckoning.

His constant preaching was very substantial, elaborate, and greatly to edification. He used to say, He could not starch in his preaching ; that is, he would not ; as knowing that where the language and expression is stiff, forced, and fine, as some call it, it does not reach the greatest part of the hearers. When he grew old he would say, Sure he might now take a greater liberty to talk in the pulpit ; that is, to speak familiarly to the people ; yet to the last he abated not in his preparations, nor ever delivered any thing raw and undigested ; much less any thing unbecoming the gravity and seriousness of the work. If his preaching was talking, it was talking to the purpose. His sermons were not common-place, but, even when his subjects were the most plain and trite, his management of them was usually peculiar and surprising. In those years, as formerly, he kept for the most part in a method for subjects, and was very seldom above one sabbath upon a text. His constant practice was, as it had been before, when he concluded a subject, to spend one sabbath in a brief rehearsal of the substance of many sermons which he had preached upon it ; which he called the clinching of the nail, that it might be as a

nail in a sure place. So very industrious was he, and no less ingenious in his endeavours, that his hearers might be "able, after his decease, to have these things always in remembrance," (2 Pet. i. 15); and, by the blessing of God, the effect did not altogether disappoint his expectation. In the latter years of his ministry, he often contrived the heads of sermons to begin with the same letter, or rather two and two of a letter; but he did not at all seem to affect or force it; only if it fell naturally and easily, he thought it a good help to memory, and of use, especially to the younger sort. And, he would say, the chief reason why he did it, was, because it is frequently observed in Scripture, particularly the book of Psalms: and though it is not a fashionable ornament of discourse, if it be a Scripture-ornament, that is sufficient to recommend it, at least to justify it against the imputation of childishness. But the excellency of his sermons lay chiefly in the enlargements, which were always very solid, grave, and judicious; but in expressing and marshalling his heads, he often condescended below his own judgment, to help his hearers' memory. He made short memorandums of some of his subjects, when he had finished them, in verse, a distich or two upon each sabbath's work; and gave them in writing to the young ones of his congregation, many of whom wrote them, learned them, and profited by them.

He constantly celebrated the Lord's Supper in his congregation once a month, and always to a considerable number of communicants. His administration of this ordinance was very solemn and affecting. Such as desired to be admitted to the Lord's Supper, he first discoursed with concerning their spiritual state, and how the case stood between God and their souls: not only to examine them, but to instruct, teach, and encourage them, as he saw occasion; gently leading those whom he discerned to be serious, though weak and timorous. He usually discoursed with them more

than once, as finding precept upon precept, and line upon line necessary ; but he did it with such mildness, humility, tenderness, and endeavour to make the best of every one, as greatly affected and won upon all. He was herein like our great Master, who "can have compassion on the ignorant, and doth not despise the day of small things."

But his admission of young people, out of the rank of catechumens into that of communicants, had a peculiar solemnity in it. When such as he catechised grew up to years of discretion, if he observed them to be intelligent and serious, he marked them out to be admitted to the Lord's Supper. When he had a competent number of such, twelve or fifteen perhaps, or more, he ordered each of them to come to him severally, and discoursed with them of things belonging to their everlasting peace ; put it to their choice whom they would serve ; and endeavoured to affect them with those things with which by their catechism they had been made acquainted ; drawing them with the cords of love into the way, which is called holy. For several Lord's days he catechised them in public. Then he appointed a day in the week before the ordinance ; when in a solemn assembly on purpose, he prayed for them, and preached a sermon to them, proper to their age and circumstances ; and so the following sabbath they were all received together at the Lord's Supper. He has recorded in his diary, upon one of these occasions, as his heart's desire and prayer for those who were thus admitted ; "That it might be as the day of their espousals to the Lord Jesus, and that they might each of them have a wedding garment."

The discipline he observed in his congregation was not such as he could have wished for, but the best he could get, considering what a scattered flock he had, which was his trouble, but it could not be helped. But whatever offence or breaches of christian peace happened, Mr. Henry's peculiar excellency lay in restoring with the spirit of meekness ; which, with his

great prudence, love, and condescension, so much commanded the respect of his people, and won upon them, that there was universal satisfaction in all his management; and it might truly be said of him, as of David, (2 Sam. iii. 36,) that "whatsoever he did pleased all the people." This is an instance and evidence, that those ministers who rule by love and meekness, need no other laws or canons to rule by, than those of the Holy Scripture. "How forcible are right words!" Job vi. 25.

He was very strict and serious in observing the public fasts appointed by authority, and called them a delight. He had seldom any one to assist him in carrying on the duties of those days. He began about nine o'clock, and never left the pulpit till about four in the afternoon, spending all that time in praying, expounding, singing, and preaching, to the admiration of all that heard him, who were generally more on such days than usual. And he was sometimes observed to be more warm and lively towards the latter end of the duties of a fast-day than at the beginning; as if his spirit was more willing and enlarged when the flesh was most weak. In all his performances on public fast-days, he attended to what was the proper work of the day. His prayers and pleadings with God, on those days, were especially for national mercies, and the pardon of national sins. How excellently did he order the cause before God, and fill his mouth with arguments, in his large and particular intercessions for the land, for the King, the government, the army, the navy, the church, and French protestants, &c. "It is most proper (said he), to preach of Christ on Lord's days, to preach of sin on fast-days, and to preach duty on both. Hypocrisy in hearers, and flattery in preachers, (as he would sometimes say,) is bad at any time, but it is especially abominable upon a day of humiliation."

He preached a great many lectures in the

neighbourhood, some stated, some occasional, in supplying which he was very indefatigable. He has sometimes preached a lecture, rode eight or nine miles, and preached another, and the next day two more. To quicken himself to diligence, he would often say, "Our opportunities are passing away, and we must work while it is day, for the night cometh." He took all occasions in his lectures abroad, to possess the minds of people with sober and moderate principles, and to stir them up to the serious regard of those things wherein we are all agreed. "We are met here together," said he in an exhortation with which he often began his lecture, "not because we think ourselves better than others, but because we desire to be better than we are."

He was very happy in the choice of subjects for his week-day lectures. At one which was stated, he preached against errors in general, from James i. 16, "Do not err, my beloved brethren:" particularly from divers other scriptures he shewed, that we must not err concerning God and Christ, and the Spirit; concerning sin and repentance, faith and good works; concerning God's ordinances; concerning grace and peace, and afflictions and prosperity, and the things of the life to come. At the monthly lectures at his own house, he chose to preach upon the four last things—Death and Judgment, Heaven and Hell, in many particulars; but commonly with a new text for every sermon. When he had in many sermons finished the first of the four, one that used to hear him sometimes, enquiring of his progress in his subject, asked him if he had done with death, meaning his subject concerning death, to which he pleasantly replied, "No, I have not done with him yet; I must have another turn with him, and he will give me a fall; but I hope to have the victory at last." He would sometimes remove the lectures in the country from one place to another, for the benefit of those who could not travel. Once,

having adjourned a lecture to a new place, he began it with a sermon on Acts xvii. 6, "These men, that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also;" in which he shewed how false the charge is, as they meant it; for religion doth not disturb the peace of families or societies, doth not cause any disorder or unquietness, &c. And yet in another sense there is a great truth in it; that when the gospel comes in power to any soul, it "turns the world upside down" in that soul, such is the change it makes there. All this he did gratuitously, not being burdensome to any; nay, he was best pleased when nothing was got for his entertainment at the places where he preached, but he came home, though some miles, fasting; it was a trouble to him to see his friends careful about much serving, though it was out of their respect to him.

As he was an excellent preacher himself, so he was an exemplary hearer of the word when others preached, though every way his inferiors; so reverent, serious, and attentive was he in hearing, and so observant of what was spoken. I have heard him say, that he knew one, and I suppose it was as Paul knew a man in Christ, who could truly say, to the glory of God, that for forty years he had never slept at a sermon. He was diligent also to improve what he had heard by meditation, repetition, prayer, and discourse. He was a very great encourager of young ministers who were humble and serious, though their abilities and performances were mean. He has noted in his diary this saying of a godly man, a hearer of his, as that which affected him, 'I find it easier to go six miles to hear a sermon, than to spend one quarter of an hour in meditating upon it and praying it over in secret, as I should, when I come home.'

In the years 1687, and in 1688, he married all his five children; the three eldest in four months time, in the year 1687, and the other two in a year and a half



after ; so many swarms (as he used to call them) out of his hive ; and all not only with his full consent, but to his abundant comfort and satisfaction. He would say, he thought it the duty of parents to study to oblige their children in that affair. And though no children could be more easy and at rest in a father's house than his, yet he would sometimes say concerning them, as Naomi to Ruth (*ch.* iii. 1,) " Shall I not seek rest for thee?" Two advices he used to give to his children and others, in their choice of that relation, namely, " Keep within the bounds of profession, such as one may charitably hope is from a good principle ; and look at suitableness, in age, quality, education, temper, &c." He would commonly say to his children, with reference to that choice, " Please God and please yourselves, and you shall never displease me;" and he greatly blamed those parents, who concluded matches for their children without their consent. He never aimed at great things in the world for his children, but sought for them, in the first place, the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof. He used to mention this saying of a pious gentlewoman, who had many daughters, " The care of most people is, how to get good husbands for their daughters ; but my care is to fit my daughters to be good wives ; and then let God provide for them." In this as in other things, Mr. Henry steered by the principle, " That a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesseth." And it pleased God so to order it, that all his children were disposed of, into circumstances very agreeable and comfortable, both for life and godliness. He was greatly affected with the goodness of God to him therein ; without any forecast or contrivance of his own. " The country," says he in his diary, " take notice of it ; what then shall I render?"

All his four daughters were married at Whitewell-Chapel, and he preached a wedding-sermon for each

of them, in his own family afterwards. He would often tell his friends, that those who desire, in the married condition, to live in the favour of God, must enter upon that condition in the fear of God ; for it is an ill omen to stumble at the threshold. He had much comfort in all his children and their yoke-fellows, especially as four of the five families which branched out of his, were by Divine Providence settled at Chester.

His youngest daughter was married April 2, 1688, the same day of the year and week, as he observes in his diary, and in the same place that he was married to his dear wife, twenty-eight years before ; upon which this is his remark, " I cannot desire for them, that they should receive more from God than we have received, in that relation and condition ; but I would desire, and do desire, that they may do more for God in it, than we have done." His usual compliment to his new-married friends, was, " Others wish you all happiness, I wish you all holiness, and then there is no doubt but you will have all happiness."

When the marriage of the last of his daughters was concluded on, he thus writes : " Is Joseph gone, and Simeon gone, and must Benjamin go also ? We will not say that all these things are against us, but for us. If we must in this merciful way be bereaved of our children, let us be bereaved ; and God turn it for good to them ; as we know he will, if they love and fear his name." And when he parted with her to the house of her husband, he thus writes : " We have sent her away, not as Laban said he would have sent his daughters away, with mirth, and songs, with tabret and harp, but with prayers and tears, and hearty good wishes ; and now, (says he in his diary,) we are alone again, as we were in our beginning ; God be better to us than twenty children !" Upon the same occasion he thus writes to a dear relation ; " We are now left as we were, one and one, and yet but one : the Lord, I trust,

who has brought us thus far, will enable us to finish well ; and then all will be well, and not till then."

He often mentioned as a matter of his great comfort, and his desire that it might continue, the love and unity that was among his children ; and that, as he writes, the transplanting of them into new relations, had not lessened that love, but rather increased it ; for this he often gave thanks to the God of love ; noting from Job i. 4, that the children's love to one another is the parent's comfort and joy. In his last will, this is the prayer which he puts up for his children, "That the Lord would build them up in holiness, and continue them still in brotherly love, as a bundle of arrows which cannot be broken."

When his children were removed from him, he was a daily intercessor at the throne of grace for them and their families. Still the burnt-offerings were offered according to the number of them all. He used to say, "Surely the children of so many prayers will not miscarry." Their particular circumstances of affliction and danger, were sure to be mentioned by him with suitable petitions. The greatest affliction he saw in his family, was the death of his dear daughter-in-law, Catharine, the only daughter of Samuel Hardware, Esq. who, about a year and a half after she was transplanted into his family, to which she was the greatest comfort and ornament imaginable, died of the small-pox in child-bed, upon the thanksgiving-day for King William's accession, Feb. 14, 1689. She died but a few weeks after Mr. Henry had married the last of his daughters, upon which marriage he had said : "Now, we have a full lease ; and God only knows which life will drop first." She comforted herself in the extremity of her illness with this sentiment, "Well, when I come to heaven, I shall see that I could not have been without this affliction." She had been for some time before under some fears as to her spiritual state, but

the clouds were through grace dispelled, and she finished her course with joy, and a cheerful expectation of the glory to be revealed. When she lay ill, Mr. Henry being in fear, not only for her, but the rest of his children in Chester, who had none of them past that perilous distemper, wrote thus to his son, on the evening of the Lord's day; "I have just done the public work of this day, wherein, before some scores of witnesses, many of whom, I dare say, are not a little concerned for you, I have absolutely, freely, and unreservedly given you all up to the good-will and pleasure of our heavenly Father, waiting what he will do with us; for good I am sure we have received, and shall we not receive evil also?" He preached at Chester, upon occasion of that sad breach in his family, on Job x. 2. "Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me."

When two of his children lay dangerously ill, after he had been earnestly praying for them, he wrote thus in his diary: "If the Lord will be pleased to grant me my request this time concerning my children, I will not say, as the beggars at our door used to do, I will never ask any thing of him again; but on the contrary, he shall hear oftener from me than ever; and I will love God the better, and love prayer the better, as long as I live." He used to say, Tradesmen take it ill, if those who are in their books go to another shop; and while we are so much indebted to God for past mercies, we are bound to attend him for further mercies.

As he was an intercessor for his children, at the throne of grace, so he was upon all occasions a remembrancer to them, both by word and letter, to quicken them to what is good. How often did he inculcate this upon them: "Love one another, and the God of love and peace will be with you. Do all you can, while you are together, to help one another to heaven, that you may be together there for ever, and with the Lord." When the families of his children were in

health and peace, he wrote thus to them : "It was one of Job's comforts in his prosperity, that his children loved one another, and feasted together : the same is ours in you, which God continue. But you will not be offended, if we pray that you may none of you 'curse God in your hearts.' Remember the wheel is always in motion, and the spoke that is uppermost will be under, and therefore mix trembling always with your joy."

He much rejoiced in the visits of his children, and made that the subject of his thanksgiving, as he did other things, which were the matter of his rejoicing. His usual saying at parting, was, "This is not the world we are to be together in, and it is well it is not; but there is such a world before us." And his usual prayer was, "That our next meeting might be either in heaven, or further on in our way towards it."

He had in eight years time, twenty-four grand-children born, some by each of his children, concerning whom he would often bless God, that they were all "the sealed ones of the God of heaven, and enrolled among the lambs." On the birth-day of his second grand-child, at a troublesome time as to public affairs, he thus writes, "I have now seen my children's children, let me also see peace upon Israel; and then I will say, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart." Some were much affected, when he baptized two of his grand-children together at Chester, publicly, and preached on Gen. xxxiii. 5. "They are the children which God hath graciously given thy servant." He observed in what a pious, gracious manner Jacob speaks. He had spoken good sense, if he had only said, "They are my children;" but then he had spoken like Jacob, like one that had seen the face of God. Though our speech be not always of grace, yet it must be always *with* grace. There is a kind of language, the air of which speaks the language of Canaan : Christians should speak like Christians.

Soon after his children were married, his house was filled again with the children of several of his friends, whom he was, by much importunity, persuaded to take to board with him. All that knew him, thought it very desirable that such a master of a family, should have a large one. He was at first almost necessitated to it, by the death of his friend and kinsman, Mr. Benyon of Ash, who left his children to his care. Some he took gratuitously, or for small consideration; and when, by reason of the advances of age he could not go about doing good so much as he had done, he laid out himself to do the more at home. He kept a teacher to attend to their school-learning; and they had the benefit, not only of his inspection in that, but, which was much more, of his family-worship, sabbath-instructions, catechising and daily converse. Nothing but the hopes of good to the rising generation, could have prevailed with him to take this trouble upon him. He would often say, "We have a busy house, but there is a rest remaining. We must be doing something in the world while we are in it; but this fashion will not last long; methinks I see it passing away."

Some who had gone through a course of university-learning, at private academies, desired to spend some time in his family, before their entrance upon the ministry; that they might have the benefit, not only of his public and family-instructions, but of his learned and pious converse, in which, as he was thoroughly furnished for it, he was very free and communicative. The great point he pressed upon those who intended to be ministers, was to study the scriptures, and make them familiar. For this purpose he recommended to them the study of Hebrew, that they might be able to search the scriptures in the original. He also advised them to the use of an interlaved Bible, wherein to insert such expositions and observations, as occur occasionally in sermons or other books; which he would say, are sometimes more happy and considerable,

than those which are found in the professed commentators. When some young men desired the happiness of coming into his family, he would tell them, "You come to me, as Naaman to Elisha, expecting that I should do this and the other for you; but alas, I can but say as he did, 'Go, wash in Jordan;' go, study the scriptures. I profess to teach no other learning but the scripture-learning." It was but a little before he died, that in reading Isa. l. he observed from ver. 4, "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, &c." that the true learning of a gospel minister consists not in being able to talk Latin fluently, and to dispute in philosophy, but in being able to "speak a word in a season" to weary souls. He that knows how to do that well, is a learned minister.

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## CHAP. IX.

### *His Sickness, Death, and Burial.*

IN the time of his health, he made death very familiar to himself, by frequent and pleasing thoughts and meditations of it; and endeavoured to make it so to his friends by speaking often of it. His letters and discourses shewed his constant expectation of death; thus did he learn to die daily: and it is hard to say, whether it was more easy to him to speak, or uneasy to his friends to hear him speak, of leaving the world. This reminds me of a passage I was told by a worthy Scotch minister, Mr. Patrick Adair, that visiting Mr. Durham, of Glasgow, in his last sickness, which was long and lingering; he said to him, Sir, I hope you have so set all in order, that you will have nothing else to do but to die: "I bless God," said Mr. Durham, "I have not had that to do neither these many years."

Such is the comfort of dying daily, when we come to die indeed.

Mr. Henry's constitution was tender, and yet by the blessing of God upon his great temperance, care of his diet, and moderate exercise by walking in the air, he for many years enjoyed a good measure of health, which he used to call, "The sugar that sweetens all temporal mercies;" for which, therefore, we ought to be very thankful, and of which we ought to be very careful. He had sometimes violent fits of the cholic, which would be very afflictive for the time. Towards his latter end he was sometimes distressed with a pain, which his doctor thought might arise from the stone. Being once recovered from a sharp fit, he said to one of his friends, that asked him how he did, "He hoped, by the grace of God, he should now be able to give one blow more to the devil's kingdom;" and often professed, he did not desire to live a day longer than he might do God some service. He said to another, when he perceived himself recovering, "Well, I thought I had been putting into harbour, but find I must to sea again." He was sometimes suddenly taken with fainting fits, which when he recovered from, he would say, "Dying is but little more."

When he was in the sixty-third year of his age, he numbered the days of it, from August 24, 1693, to August 24, 1694: when he had finished it he thus wrote in his diary: "This day finishes my commonly dying year, which I have numbered the days of; and should now apply my heart more than ever to heavenly wisdom." He was much pleased with that expression of our English liturgy, in the office of burial, and frequently used it, "In the midst of life we are in death."

The increasing infirmities of age very little abated his vigour and liveliness in preaching, but he seemed to renew his youth as the eagle's; as those that are



“planted in the house of the Lord, who still bring forth fruit in old age;” not so much to show that they are upright, as “to show that the Lord is upright,” Psalm xcii. 14, 15. But in his latter years, travelling was very troublesome to him, and he would say, as Mr. Dod used to do, that when he thought like Samson, to shake himself as at other times, he found his hair was cut. His sense of this led him to preach an occasional sermon not long before he died, on John xxi. 18. “When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself.” &c. Another occasional sermon he preached when he was old, for his own comfort, and the comfort of his aged friends, on Psalm lxxi. 17, 18. “O God, thou hast taught me from my youth,” &c. He observed there, that it is a blessed thing to be taught of God from our youth; those that have been thus taught, ought to declare his wondrous works all their days; and those that have done this, may comfortably expect, that when they are old He will not forsake them.

For some years before he died, he used to complain of habitual weariness, contracted, he thought, by standing to preach immediately after riding, sometimes very uneasily, and in inconvenient places. He would say, every minister was not cut out for an itinerant; and sometimes the manifest attention and affection of people in hearing, led him to enlarge both in length and fervency, more than his strength could bear. Not many months before he died, he wrote thus to a relation, who enquired concerning his health, “I am always habitually weary, and expect no other, till I lie down in the bed of spices; and, blessed be God! so the grave is to all the saints.” While some of his friends persuaded him to spare himself, he would say, “It’s time enough to rest when I am in the grave; what were candles made for, but to burn?”

It does not appear that he had any particular pre-sages of his death; but there were many instances of

his actual gracious expectation of it, more than ordinary for some time before. The last visit he made to his children in Chester, was in July, 1695, almost a year before he died, when he spent a Lord's-day there, and preached on Philemon 25. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit." By "grace," he understood, not so much the good-will of God towards us, as the good work of God in us, called the grace of Christ, both because he is the author and finisher of it, and because he is the pattern of it. Now "the choicest gift we can ask of God for our friends is, that this grace of our Lord Jesus Christ may be with their spirits: how earnest therefore should we be in praying to God for grace, both for ourselves and for our relations!" The Thursday following being kept as a fast in his son's congregation at Chester, he preached on Luke xix. 41. "He beheld the city and wept over it," which proved his farewell to the town, as the former was his farewell to his friends and relations in it.

Not many weeks before he died, he wrote thus to one of his children, "We are well here, thanks be to God, and are glad to hear that you and yours are well also: God in mercy continue it! but why should we be well always? Do we deserve it? Are there no mixtures in our obedience? Are there any persons or families, at whose door sickness and death never knocked? Must the earth be forsaken for us, or the rock removed out of its place? Is it not enough that we be dealt with according to the manner of men? and that we have a promise, that it shall end well, everlastingly well?"

To another of his children, about the same time he writes, 'We are sensible that we decline apace, but the best of it is, that as time goes, eternity comes; and we are in good hope, through grace, that it will be a comfortable eternity.'

In April, 1696, a few weeks before he died, his

son's father-in-law, Robert Warburton, Esq. was gathered to his grave in peace, in a good old age: upon the tidings of his death, Mr. Henry wrote thus to his son: "Your fathers, where are they? your father-in-law gone, and your own father going; but you have a good Father in heaven, who lives for ever." He was wont sometimes to subscribe his letters, "Your ever-loving, but not ever-living father."

It was not a month before he died, that in a letter to his friend and brother, Mr. Tallents, of Shrewsbury, he had this passage: 'Methinks it is strange, that it should be your lot and mine, to abide so long on earth by the stuff, when so many of our friends are dividing the spoil above; but God will have it so; and to be willing to live in obedience to his holy will, is as true an act of grace, as to be willing to die when he calls, especially when life is labour and sorrow. But when it is labour and joy, service to his name, and some measure of success and comfort in serving him; when it is to stop a gap, and stem a tide, it is to be rejoiced in; it is heaven upon earth; nay, one would think, by the Psalmist's oft repeated plea, Psalm vi. xxx. lxxxviii. cxv. cxviii., that it were better than to be in heaven itself; and can that be?'

A little before his sickness and death, he had several of his children, and his children's children about him, at Broad-Oak, with whom he was much refreshed, and very cheerful? but often spoke of the fashion he was in, as passing away; and told them, he should be there but awhile to bid them welcome. He was observed frequently in prayer, to beg of God, that "he would make us ready for that, which would come certainly, and might come suddenly." One asked him how he did, he answered, "I find the chips fly off apace, the tree will be down shortly."

The last time he administered the Lord's Supper, a fortnight before he died, he closed the administration with that Scripture, 1 John iii. 2. "It doth not yet

appear what we shall be;" not yet, but it will shortly.

The sabbath but one before he died, being in the course of his exposition come to that difficult part of Scripture, the xlth of Ezekiel, and the following chapters; he said he would endeavour to explain those prophecies to them; and added, "If I do not now, I never shall:" and he observed, that the only prophetic sermon which our Lord Jesus preached, was but a few days before he died. This, many of his hearers not only reflected upon afterwards, but took notice of at that time with concern, as having something in it more than ordinary.

On the Lord's Day, June 21, 1696, he went through the work of the day with his usual vigour and liveliness. He was then preaching over the first chapter of St. Peter's Second Epistle, and was that day on those words, "Add to your faith virtue," ver. 5. He took virtue for christian courage and resolution in the exercise of faith; and the last thing he mentioned, in which Christians have need of courage, was in dying; for, as he often used to say, "It is a serious thing to die, and to die is a work by itself." That day he gave notice, both morning and afternoon, with much affection, of the public fast, which was appointed by authority the Friday following, June 26, pressing his hearers, as he used to do upon such occasions, to come in a prepared frame, to the solemn services of that day.

The Tuesday following, June 23, he rose at six o'clock, according to his custom, after a better night's sleep than ordinary, and in his wonted health. Between seven and eight o'clock he performed family-worship in the usual manner; he expounded very largely, the former half of the civth Psalm, and sang it, but was shorter in prayer than usual, being then (as it was thought) taken ill. "Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he comes, shall find so doing!"

Immediately after prayer he retired to his chamber, not saying any thing of his illness, but was soon after found upon his bed in great extremity of pain, in his back, breast, and bowels; it seemed to be a complicated fit of the stone and cholic, with very great extremity. The means used to give him relief were ineffectual; he had not the least intermission or remission of pain, neither up, nor in bed, but was in a continual agony. He said sometimes, "God's Israel may find Jordan rough; but there is no remedy; they must go through it to Canaan;" and he would speak of a good man who used to say, he was not so much afraid of death as of dying. We know they are not the godly people, part of the description of whose condition it is, that there are no bands in their death: and yet the end of the godly is peace, their death gain, and they have hope in it.

In this extremity he was still looking up to God, and calling upon him who is a present help in the needful hour. When the violence of his pain forced groans and complaints from him, he would presently correct himself with a patient and quiet submission to his heavenly Father, and a cheerful acquiescence in his will. "I am ashamed, said he, of these groans; I want virtue, O for virtue now, when I have need of it! (referring to his subject the Lord's Day before.) Forgive me that I groan thus, and I will endeavour to silence them; but indeed 'my stroke is heavier than my groaning.' It is true that Mr. Baxter said in his pain, there is no disputing against sense. It was his trouble, as it was Mr. Baxter's, that by reason of his bodily pain, he could not express his inward comfort; however, with that, God graciously strengthened him in his soul. He said to those about him, they must remember what instructions and counsels he had given them when he was in health; for now he could say but little to them, only refer them to what he had said, as to that which he would live and die by.

It was two or three hours after he was taken ill,

before he would suffer a messenger to be sent to Chester for his son, and the doctor, saying he should either be better or dead before they could come, but at last said, as the prophet did to his importunate friends, "Send." About eight o'clock that evening they came, and found him in the same extremity of pain, which he had been in all day. And nature, being spent with his constant and indefatigable labours in the work of the Lord, now sank under its burden, and was quite disabled to grapple with so many hours incessant pain. What further means were then used proved fruitless. He apprehended himself going apace, and said to his son, when he came in, "O son, you are welcome to a dying father! I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." His pain continued very acute, but he had peace within. "I am tormented (said he once), but blessed be God! not in this flame;" and soon after "I am all on fire," when, at the same time, his extreme parts were cold, but presently added, "Blessed be God! it is not the fire of hell." To some of his neighbours who came in to see him, he said, "O make sure work for your souls, by getting an interest in Christ while you are in health; for if I had that work to do now, what would become of me? but I bless God I am satisfied." It was a caution he was often wont to give, "See to it, that your work be not undone, when your time is done, lest you be undone for ever."

Towards ten or eleven o'clock that night, his pulse and sight began to fail; of the latter he himself took notice, and inferred from it the near approach of his dissolution. He took an affectionate farewell of his dear yoke-fellow, with a thousand thanks for a'l her love, care, and tenderness; and left a blessing for all his dear children, their dear yoke-fellows, and little ones, that were absent. He said to his son, who sat under his head; "Son, the Lord bless you, and grant that you may do worthily in your generation, and be more

serviceable to the church of God than I have been." Such was his great humility to the last. And when his son replied, "O, Sir, pray for me, that I may but tread in your steps;" he answered, "Yea, follow peace and holiness, and let them say what they will." More he would have said, to bear his dying testimony to the way in which he had walked, but nature was spent, and he had not strength to express it.

His understanding and speech continued almost to the last breath, and in his dying agonies he was still calling upon God, and committing himself to him. The last words he said, when he found himself ready to depart, were, "O death, where is thy —?" with that his speech faltered, and within a few minutes (after about sixteen hours illness) he quietly breathed out his precious soul, into the hands of his dear Redeemer, whom he had trusted, and faithfully served in the work of the ministry, about forty-three years. He departed betwixt twelve and one o'clock in the morning of June 24, 1696, Midsummer-day, in the sixty-fifth year of his age. Happy, thrice happy he, to whom such a sudden change was no surprise, and who could triumph over death, as a stingless, disarmed enemy, even when he made so fierce an onset! He had often spoken of it as his desire, that if it were the will of God, "he might not outlive his usefulness;" and it pleased God to grant him his desire, and to give him a short passage from the pulpit to the kingdom; from the height of his usefulness, to receive the recompense of reward.

After the account we have given of his great usefulness, it is easy to imagine what sorrow and mourning there was among his friends, when they heard that the Lord had taken away their master from their head. One that lived so much desired, could not but die much lamented.

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# CHRISTIAN BIOGRAPHY.

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## THE LIFE OF THE REV. JOHN NEWTON,

*Rector of St. Mary Woolnoth, London.*

  
"AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE," WRITTEN BY HIMSELF:  
TO WHICH SOME FURTHER PARTICULARS ARE ADDED.

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I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not ; I will lead them  
in paths that they have not known, I will make darkness light  
before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do  
unto them, and not forsake them.—*Isa.* xlii. 16.

I am as a wonder unto many.—*Psal.* lxxi. 7.

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Religious Tract Society,

*Instituted 1799 ;*

PUBLISHED AND SOLD AT THE DEPOSITORY, 56, PATER-  
NOSTER-ROW ; BY J. NISBET, 21, BERNERS STREET ;  
AND OTHER BOOKSELLERS.



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**Printed by J. Rider, Little Britain, London.**

THE LIFE OF  
THE REV. JOHN NEWTON,

RECTOR OF ST. MARK WOOLNOTH, LONDON.

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*The following Letters were written by the late Rev. J. Newton to the Rev. T. Haweis, and were first published in the Year 1764.*

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LETTER I.

**I** MAKE no doubt but you have at times had pleasing reflections upon that promise made to the Israelites, in Deut. viii. 2. They were then in the wilderness surrounded with difficulties, which were greatly aggravated by their own distrust and perverseness: they had experienced a variety of dispensations, the design of which they could not as yet understand; they frequently lost sight of God's gracious purposes in their favour, and were much discouraged by reason of the way. To compose and animate their minds, Moses here suggests to them, that there was a future happy time drawing near, when their journey and warfare should be finished; that they should soon be put in possession of the promised land, and have rest from all their fears and troubles: and then it would give them pleasure to look back upon what they now found so uneasy to bear:—"Thou shalt remember all the way by which the Lord thy God led thee through this wilderness."

But the importance and comfort of these words is still greater, if we consider them in a spiritual sense, as addressed to all who are passing through the wilderness of this world to a heavenly Canaan; who, by faith in the promises and power of God, are seeking an eternal rest in that kingdom which cannot be shaken. The hope of that glorious inheritance inspires us with some degree of courage and zeal to press forward to where Jesus has already entered as our forerunner; and when our eye is fixed upon him, we are more than conquerors over all that would withstand our progress. But we have not yet attained; we still feel the infirmities of a fallen nature; through the remains of ignorance and unbelief, we often mistake the Lord's dealings with us, and are ready to complain, when, if we knew all, we should rather rejoice. But to us likewise there is a time coming, when our warfare shall be accomplished, our views enlarged, and our light increased; then with what transports of adoration and love shall we look back upon the way by which the Lord led us! We shall then see and acknowledge, that mercy and goodness directed every step; we shall see, that what our ignorance once called adversities and evils, were in reality blessings which we could not have done well without; that nothing befel us without a cause; that no trouble came upon us sooner, or pressed on us more heavily, or continued longer, than our case required; in a word, that our many afflictions were each in their place among the means employed by divine grace and wisdom, to bring us to the possession of that exceeding and eternal weight of glory which the Lord has prepared for his people. And even in this imperfect state, though we are seldom able to judge aright of our present circumstances, yet if we look upon the years of our past life, and compare the dispensations we have been brought through, with the frame of our minds under each successive period; if we consider how

wonderfully one thing has been connected with another, so that what we now number amongst our greatest advantages, perhaps, took their first rise from incidents which we thought hardly worthy our notice; and that we have sometimes escaped the greatest dangers that threatened us, not by any wisdom or foresight of our own, but by the intervention of circumstances which we neither desired nor thought of:— I say, when we compare and consider these things by the light offered us in the Holy Scriptures, we may collect indisputable proof, from the narrow circle of our own concerns, that the wise and good providence of God watches over his people from the earliest moment of their lives; overrules and guards them through all their wanderings in a state of ignorance, and leads them in a way that they know not, till at length his providence and grace concur in those events and impressions which bring them to the knowledge of him and themselves.

I am persuaded, that every believer will, upon due reflection, see enough in his own case to confirm this remark; but not all in the same degree. The outward circumstances of many have been uniform, they have known but little variety of life; and, with respect to their inward change, it has been effected in a secret way, unnoticed by others, and almost unperceived by themselves. The Lord has spoken to them, not in thunder and tempest, but with a still small voice he has drawn them gradually to himself: so that, though they have a happy assurance of the thing, that they know and love him, and are passed from death unto life, yet of the precise time and manner, they can give little account. Others he seems to select, in order to show the exceeding riches of his grace, and the greatness of his mighty power: he suffers the natural rebellion and wickedness of their hearts to have full scope; while sinners of less note are cut off with little warning, these are spared, though sinning with a high

hand, and, as it were, studying their own destruction. At length, when all that knew them are perhaps expecting to hear that they are made signal instances of divine vengeance, the Lord (whose thoughts are high above ours, as the heavens are higher than the earth) is pleased to pluck them as brands out of the fire, and to make them monuments of his mercy, for the encouragement of others: they are, beyond expectation, convinced, pardoned, and changed.

A case of this sort indicates a divine power no less than the creation of a world: it is evidently the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in the eyes of all those who are not blinded by prejudice and unbelief.

Such was the persecuting Saul: his heart was full of enmity against *Jesus of Nazareth*, and therefore he persecuted and made havoc of his disciples

He had been a terror to the church of Jerusalem, and was going to Damascus with the same views.—He was yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against all that loved the Lord Jesus.—He thought little of the mischief he had hitherto done. He was engaged for the suppression of the whole sect; and hurrying from house to house, from place to place, he carried menaces in his look, and repeated threatenings with every breath. Such was his spirit and temper, when the Lord Jesus, whom he hated and opposed, checked him in the height of his rage, called this bitter persecutor to the honour of an apostle, and inspired him to preach, with great zeal and earnestness, that faith which he so lately destroyed.

Nor are we without remarkable displays of the same sovereign efficacious grace in our own times:—I may particularly mention the instance of the late Colonel Gardiner. If any real satisfaction could be found in a sinful course, he would have met with it; for he pursued the experiment with all possible advantages.—He was habituated to evil; and many uncommon, almost miraculous, deliverances made no impression upon

him. Yet *he* likewise was made willing in the day of God's power: and the bright example of his life, illustrated and diffused by the account of him published since his death, has afforded an occasion of much praise to God, and much comfort to his people.

After the mention of such names, can you permit me, Sir, to add *my own*? If I do, it must be with a very humbling distinction. These once eminent sinners proved eminent Christians: much had been forgiven them, they loved much. St. Paul could say, "The grace bestowed upon me was not in vain; for I laboured more abundantly than they all." Colonel Gardiner likewise was as a city set upon a hill, a burning and a shining light: the manner of his conversion was hardly more singular than the whole course of his conversation from that time to his death. Here, alas! the parallel greatly fails. It has not been thus with me. I must take deserved shame to myself, that I have made very unsuitable returns for what I have received. But, if the question is only concerning the patience and long-suffering of God, the wonderful interposition of his providence in favour of an unworthy sinner, the power of his grace in softening the hardest heart, and the riches of his mercy in pardoning the most enormous and aggravated transgressions; in these respects I know no case more extraordinary than my own. And indeed most persons, to whom I have related my story, have thought it worthy of being preserved.

I never gave any succinct account, in writing, of the Lord's dealing with me, till very lately: for I was deterred on the one hand, by the great difficulty of writing properly when *Self* is concerned; on the other, by the ill use which persons of corrupt and perverse minds are often known to make of such instances. The Psalmist reminds us, that a reserve in these things is proper, when he says, "Come and hear, all ye *that fear God*, and I will declare what he hath done for

my soul;" and our Lord cautions us not to "cast pearls before swine." The pearls of a Christian are, perhaps, his choice experiences of the Lord's power and love in the concerns of his soul; and these should not be at all adventures made public, lest we give occasion to earthly and grovelling souls to profane what they cannot understand. These were the chief reasons of my backwardness; but a few weeks since I yielded to the judgment and request of a much-respected friend, and sent him a relation at large, in a series of eight letters. The event has been what I little expected: I wrote to one person; but my letters have fallen into many hands: amongst others, I find they have reached your notice; and, instead of blaming me for being too tedious and circumstantial, which was the fault I feared I had committed, you are pleased to desire a still more distinct detail. As you and other of my friends apprehend my compliance with this request may be attended with some good effect, may promote the pleasing work of praise to our adorable Redeemer, or confirm the faith of some or other of his people, I am willing to obey: I give up my own reasonings upon the inexpediency of so inconsiderable a person as myself adventuring in so public a point of view. If God may be glorified on my behalf, and his children in any measure comforted or instructed by what I have to declare of his goodness, I shall be satisfied; and am content to leave all other possible consequences of this undertaking in His hands who does all things well.

I must again have recourse to my memory, as I retained no copies of the letters you saw. So far as I can recollect, what I then wrote I will relate; but shall not affect a needless variety of phrase and manner, merely because those have been already perused by many. I may, perhaps, in some places when repeating the same facts, express myself in nearly the same words; yet I propose, according to your desire, to make this relation more explicit and particular than

the former; especially towards the close, which I wound up hastily, lest my friend should be wearied. I hope you will likewise excuse me, if I do not strictly confine myself to narration, but now and then intersperse such reflections as may offer while I am writing; and though you have signified your intentions of communicating what I send you to others, I must not, on this account, affect a conciseness and correctness, which is not my natural talent, lest the whole should appear dry and constrained. I shall, therefore, if possible, think only of you, and write with that confidence and freedom which your friendship and candour deserve. This sheet may stand as a preface; and I purpose, as far as I can, to intermit many other engagements, until I have completed the task you have assigned me. In the mean time, I intreat the assistance of your prayers, that in this, and all my poor attempts, I may have a single eye to His glory, who was pleased to call me out of horrid darkness into the marvellous light of his gospel.

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## LETTER II.

I CAN sometimes feel a pleasure in repeating the grateful acknowledgment of David, "O Lord, I am thy servant, the son of thine handmaid; thou hast loosed my bonds." The tender mercies of God towards me were manifested in the first moment of my life. I was born, as it were, in his house, and dedicated to him in my infancy. My mother (as I have heard from many) was a pious experienced Christian: she was a dissenter, in communion with the late Dr. Jennings. I was her only child; and as she was of a weak constitution, and a retired temper, almost her whole employment was the care of my education. I have some faint remembrance of her care and



instructions. At a time when I could not be more than three years of age, she herself taught me English; and with so much success, (as I had something of a forward turn,) that when I was four years old, I could read with propriety in any common book that offered. She stored my memory, which was then very retentive, with many valuable pieces, chapters, and portions of Scripture, catechisms, hymns, and poems. My temper at that time seemed quite suitable to her wishes: I had little inclination to the noisy sports of children, but was best pleased when in her company, and always as willing to learn as she was to teach me. How far the best education may fall short of reaching the heart, will strongly appear in the sequel of my history: yet I think, for the encouragement of pious parents to go on in the good way, of doing their part faithfully to form their children's minds, I may properly propose myself as an instance. Though in process of time I sinned away all the advantages of these early impressions, yet they were for a great while a restraint upon me; they returned again and again, and it was very long before I could wholly shake them off; and when the Lord at length opened my eyes, I found a great benefit from the recollection of them. Further, my dear mother, besides the pains she took with me, often commended me with many prayers and tears to God; and I doubt not but I reap the fruits of these prayers to this hour.

My mother observed my early progress with peculiar pleasure, and intended from the first to bring me up with a view to the ministry, if the Lord should so incline my heart. In my sixth year I began to learn Latin; but before I had time to know much about it, the intended plan of my education was broken short. The Lord's designs were far beyond the views of an earthly parent: he was pleased to reserve me for an unusual proof of his patience, providence, and grace; and therefore overruled the purpose of my friends, by

depriving me of this excellent parent when I was something under seven years old. I was born the 24th of July, 1725, and she died the 11th of that month, 1732.

My father was then at sea, (he was a commander in the Mediterranean trade at that time): he came home the following year: and soon after married again. Thus I passed into different hands. I was well treated in all other respects; but the loss of my mother's instructions was not repaired. I was now permitted to mingle with careless and profane children, and soon began to learn their ways. Soon after my father's marriage, I was sent to a boarding-school in Essex, where the imprudent severity of the master almost broke my spirit, and relish for books. With him I forgot the first principles and rules of arithmetic, which my mother had taught me years before. I staid there two years: in the last of the two, a new usher coming, who observed and suited my temper, I took to the Latin with great eagerness; so that before I was ten years old, I reached and maintained the first post in the second class, which in that school read Tully and Virgil. I believe I was pushed forward too fast, and therefore, not being grounded, I soon lost all I had learned, (for I left school in my tenth year;) and when I long afterwards undertook the Latin language from books, I think I had little, if any advantage from what I had learned before.

My father's second marriage was from a family in Essex; and when I was eleven years old, he took me with him to sea. He was a man of remarkable good sense, and great knowledge of the world; he took great care of my morals, but could not supply my mother's part. Having been educated himself in Spain, he always observed an air of distance and severity in his carriage, which overawed and discouraged my spirit. I was always in fear when before him, and therefore he had the less influence. From that

time to the year 1742 I made several voyages; but with considerable intervals between; which were chiefly spent in the country, excepting a few months in my fifteenth year, when I was placed upon a very advantageous prospect at Alicant in Spain. But my unsettled behaviour, and impatience of restraint, rendered that design abortive.

In this period, my temper and conduct were exceedingly various. At school, or soon after<sup>d</sup>, I had little concern about religion, and easily received very ill impressions. But I was often disturbed with convictions. I was fond of reading from a child; among other books, *Bennet's Christian Oratory* often came in my way: and though I understood but little of it, the course of life therein recommended appeared very desirable, and I was inclined to attempt it: I began to pray, to read the Scriptures, and keep a sort of diary. I was presently religious in my own eyes; but, alas! this seeming goodness had no solid foundation, but passed away like a morning-cloud, or the early dew. I was soon weary, gradually gave it up, and became worse than before. Instead of prayer, I learned to curse and blaspheme, and was exceedingly wicked when from under my parent's view. All this was before I was twelve years old. About that time I had a dangerous fall from a horse: I was thrown, I believe, within a few inches of a hedge-row newly cut down. I got no hurt; but could not avoid taking notice of a gracious providence in my deliverance; for had I fallen upon the stakes, I had inevitably been killed. My conscience suggested to me the dreadful consequences if, in such a state, I had been summoned to appear before God. I presently broke off from my profane practices, and appeared quite altered. But it was not long before I declined again. These struggles between sin and conscience were often repeated; but the consequence was, that every relapse sunk me into still greater depths of wickedness. I was once roused

by the loss of an intimate companion. We had agreed to go on board a man of war (I think it was on a Sunday) ; but I providentially came too late ; the boat was upset, and he and several others were drowned. I was invited to the funeral of my play-fellow, and was exceedingly affected, to think that by a delay of a few minutes (which had much displeased and angered me till I saw the event) my life had been preserved. However, this likewise was soon forgot. At another time, the perusal of the *Family Instructor*\* put me upon a partial and transient reformation. In brief, though I cannot distinctly relate particulars, I think I took up and laid aside a religious profession three or four different times before I was sixteen years of age : but all this while my heart was insincere. I often saw the necessity of religion as a means of escaping hell ; but I loved sin, and was unwilling to forsake it. Instances of this, I can remember, were frequent. In the midst of all my forms, I was so strangely blind and stupid, that sometimes when I have been determined upon things which I knew were sinful, and contrary to my duty, I could not go on quietly till I had first despatched my ordinary task of prayer, in which I have grudged every moment of my time ; and when this was finished, my conscience was in some measure pacified, and I could rush into folly with little remorse.

My last reform was the most remarkable, both for degree and continuance. Of this period, at least of some part of it, I may say in the Apostle's words, "After the straitest sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee." I did every thing that might be expected from a person entirely ignorant of God's righteousness, and desirous to establish his own. I spent the greatest part of every day in reading the Scriptures,

\* "The two Apprentices," published by the Religious Tract Society, are taken from this work.—ED.

meditation and prayer. I fasted often; I even abstained from all animal food for three months; I would hardly answer a question for fear of speaking an idle word. I seemed to bemoan my former miscarriages very earnestly, sometimes with tears. In short, I became an ascetic, and endeavoured, so far as my situation would permit, to renounce society, that I might avoid temptation. I continued in this serious mood (I cannot give it a higher title) for more than two years without any considerable breaking off: but it was a poor religion; it left me, in many respects, under the power of sin; and, so far as it prevailed, only tended to make me gloomy, stupid, unsociable, and useless.

Such was the frame of my mind when I became acquainted with a work of Lord Shaftesbury's. I saw the second volume of his *Characteristics* in a petty shop at Middleburg in Holland. The title allured me to buy it, and the style and manner gave me great pleasure in reading, especially the second piece, which his lordship, with great propriety, has intitled, *A Rhapsody*. Nothing could be more suited to the romantic turn of my mind, than the address of this pompous declamation. Of the design and tendency I was not aware: I thought the author a most religious person, and that I had only to follow him and be happy. Thus, with fine words, and fair speeches, my simple heart was beguiled. This book was always in my hand: I read it till I could very nearly repeat the *Rhapsody verbatim* from beginning to end. No immediate effect followed; but it operated like a slow poison, and prepared the way for all that followed.

This letter brings my history down to December, 1742. I was then lately returned from a voyage; and my father not intending me for the sea again, was thinking how to settle me in the world: but I had little life or spirit for business; I knew but little of men and things. I was fond of a visionary scheme of

a contemplative life, a medley of religion, philosophy, and indolence; and was quite averse to the thoughts of an industrious application to business. At length a merchant in Liverpool, an intimate friend of my father's, (to whom, as the instrument of God's goodness, I have since been chiefly indebted for all my earthly comforts) proposed to send me for some years to Jamaica, and to charge himself with the care of my future fortune. I consented to this: and every thing was prepared for my voyage. I was upon the point of setting out the following week. In the mean time my father sent me on some business to a place a few miles beyond Maidstone in Kent; and this little journey, which was to have been only for three or four days, occasioned a sudden and remarkable turn, which roused me from the habitual indolence I had contracted, and gave rise to the series of uncommon dispensations, of which you desire a more particular account. So true it is, that "the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

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### LETTER III.

A few days before my intended journey into Kent, I received an invitation to visit a family in that county. They were distant relations, but very intimate friends of my dear mother. She died in their house; but a coolness took place upon my father's second marriage, and I had heard nothing of them for many years. As my road lay within half a mile of their house, I obtained my father's leave to call on them. I was, however, very indifferent about it, and sometimes thought of passing on: however, I went. I was known at first sight, before I could tell my name, and met with the kindest reception, as the child of a dear

deceased friend. My friends had two daughters. The eldest (as I understood some years afterwards) had been often considered by her mother and mine, as a future wife for me, from the time of her birth. I know, indeed, that intimate friends frequently amuse themselves with such distant prospects for their children, and that they miscarry much oftener than succeed. I do not say that my mother predicted what was to happen, yet there was something remarkable in the manner of its taking place. All intercourse between the families had been long broken off; I was going into a foreign country, and only called to pay a hasty visit; and this I should not have thought of, but for a message received just at that crisis, for I had not been invited at any time before. Thus the circumstances were precarious in the highest degree, and the event was as extraordinary. Almost at the first sight of this girl (for she was then under fourteen) I was impressed with an affection for her, which never abated or lost its influence a single moment in my heart from that hour. In degree, it actually equalled all that the writers of romance have imagined; in duration, it was unalterable. I soon lost all sense of religion, and became deaf to the remonstrances of conscience and prudence; but my regard for her was always the same; and I may perhaps venture to say, that none of the scenes of misery and wickedness I afterwards experienced, ever banished her a single hour together from my waking thoughts, for the seven following years.

Give me leave, Sir, to reflect a little upon this unexpected incident, and to consider its influence upon my future life, and how far it was subservient to the views of Divine Providence concerning me: which seem to have been twofold; that by being given up for a while to the consequences of my own wilfulness, and afterwards reclaimed by a high hand, my case, so far as it should be known, might be both a warning and an encouragement to others.

In the first place, hardly any thing less than this violent and commanding passion would have been sufficient to awaken me from the dull melancholy habit I had contracted. I was almost a misanthrope, notwithstanding I so much admired the pictures of virtue and benevolence as drawn by lord Shaftesbury; but now my reluctance to active life was overpowered at once, and I was willing to be or to do any thing which might subserve the accomplishment of my wishes at some future time.

Farther, when I afterwards made shipwreck of faith, hope, and conscience, my love to this person was the only remaining principle which in any degree supplied their place; and the bare possibility of seeing her again, was the only present and obvious means of restraining me from the most horrid designs against myself and others.

But then the ill effects it brought upon me counterbalanced these advantages. The interval usually styled *the time of courtship*, is indeed a pleasing part of life, where there is a mutual affection, the consent of friends, a reasonable prospect as to settlement, and the whole is conducted in a prudential manner, and in subordination to the will and fear of God. When things are thus situated, it is a blessing to be susceptible of the tender passions. But when these concomitants are wanting, what we call *love* is the most tormenting passion in itself, and the most destructive in its *consequences*, that can be named. And they were all wanting in my case. I durst not mention it to her friends, or to my own, nor indeed, for a considerable time to herself, as I could make no proposals: it remained as a dark fire, locked up in my own breast, which gave me constant uneasiness. By introducing an idolatrous regard to a creature, it greatly weakened my sense of religion, and made farther way for the entrance of infidel principles; and though it seemed to promise great things, as an incentive to diligence and



activity in life, in reality it performed nothing. I often formed mighty projects in my mind of what I would willingly do or suffer for the sake of her I loved; yet while I could have her company, I was incapable of forcing myself away, to improve opportunities that offered. Still less could it do in regulating my conduct. It did not prevent me from engaging in a long train of excess and riot, utterly unworthy the honourable pretensions I had formed. And though, through the wonderful interposition of Divine Goodness, the maze of my follies was at length unravelled, and my wishes crowned in such a manner as overpaid my sufferings; yet I am sure I would not go through the same series of trouble again, to possess all the treasures of both the Indies. I have enlarged more than I intended on this point, as perhaps these papers may be useful to caution others against indulging an ungovernable passion, by my painful experience. How often may such headstrong votaries be said "to sow the wind, and to reap the whirlwind!"

My heart being now fixed and rivetted to a particular object, I considered every thing I was concerned with in a new light. I concluded it would be absolutely impossible to live at such a distance as Jamaica, for a term of four or five years; and therefore determined, at all events, that I would not go. I could not bear either to acquaint my father with the true reason, or to invent a false one; therefore, without taking any notice to him why I did so, I stayed three weeks instead of three days, in Kent, till I thought (as it proved) the opportunity would be lost, and the ships sailed. I then returned to London. I had highly displeased my father by this disobedience; but he was more easily reconciled than I could have expected. In a little time I sailed with a friend of his to Venice. In this voyage I was exposed to the company and ill example of the common sailors, among whom I ranked. Importunity and opportunity pre-

senting every day, I once more began to relax from the sobriety and order which I had observed, in some degree for more than two years. I was sometimes pierced with sharp convictions; but though I made a few faint efforts to stop, I never recovered from this declension, as I had done from several before: I did not, indeed, as yet turn out profligate; but I was making large strides towards a total apostacy from God! The most remarkable check and alarm I received (and, for what I know, the last) was by a dream, which made a very strong, though not abiding impression upon mind.

The consideration of whom I am writing to, renders it needless for me either to enter upon a discussion of the nature of dreams in general, or to make an apology for recording my own. Those who acknowledge Scripture will allow that there have been monitory and supernatural dreams, evident communications from Heaven, either directing or foretelling future events: and those who are acquainted with the history and experience of the people of God, are well assured, that such intimations have not been totally withheld in any period down to the present times. Reason, far from contradicting this supposition, strongly pleads for it, where the process of reasoning is rightly understood and carefully pursued. So that a late eminent writer,\* who I presume is not generally charged with enthusiasm, undertakes to prove, that the phenomenon of dreaming is inexplicable at least, if not absolutely impossible, without taking in the agency and intervention of spiritual beings, to us invisible. I would refer the incredulous to him. For my own part, I can say, without scruple, "The dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." I am sure I dreamed to the following effect; and I cannot doubt, from what I have seen since, that it had a direct and

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\* Baxter on the *vis inertia*.

easy application to my own circumstances, to the dangers in which I was about to plunge myself, and to the unmerited deliverance and mercy which God would be pleased to afford me in the time of my distress.

Though I have written out a relation of this dream more than once for others, it has happened that I never reserved a copy; but the principal incidents are so deeply engraven on my memory, that I believe I am not liable to any considerable variation in repeating the account. The scene presented to my imagination was the harbour of Venice, where we had lately been. I thought it was night, and my watch upon the deck; and that, as I was walking to and fro by myself, a person came to me, (I do not remember from whence,) and brought me a ring, with an express charge to keep it carefully; assuring me, that while I preserved that ring, I should be happy and successful; but if I lost or parted with it, I must expect nothing but trouble and misery. I accepted the present and the terms willingly, not in the least doubting my own care to preserve it, and highly satisfied to have my happiness in my own keeping. I was engaged in these thoughts, when a second person came to me, and observing the ring on my finger, took occasion to ask me some questions concerning it. I readily told him its virtues; and his answer expressed a surprise at my weakness, in expecting such effects from a ring. I think he reasoned with me some time upon the impossibility of the thing; and at length urged me, in direct terms, to throw it away. At first I was shocked at the proposal; but his insinuations prevailed. I began to reason and doubt myself: and at last plucked it off my finger, and dropped it over the ship's side into the water: which it had no sooner touched, than I saw, the same instant, a terrible fire burst out from a range of the mountains, (a part of the Alps,) which appeared at some distance behind

the city of Venice. I saw the hills as distinctly as if awake, and they were all in flames. I perceived too late my folly; and my tempter, with an air of insult, informed me, that all the mercy of God had in reserve for me was comprised in that ring, which I had wilfully thrown away. I understood that I must now go with him to the burning mountains; and that all the flames I saw were kindled upon my account. I trembled, and was in a great agony; so that it was surprising I did not then awake: but my dream continued; and when I thought myself upon the point of a constrained departure, and stood, self-condemned, without plea or hope, suddenly, either a third person, or the same who brought the ring at first, came to me, (I am not certain which,) and demanded the cause of my grief. I told him the plain case, confessing that I had ruined myself wilfully, and deserved no pity. He blamed my rashness; and asked, if I should be wiser supposing I had my ring again. I could hardly answer to this; for I thought it was gone beyond recall. I believe, indeed, I had not time to answer, before I saw this unexpected friend go down under the water, just in the spot where I had dropped it; and he soon returned, bringing the ring with him. The moment he came on board, the flames in the mountains were extinguished, and my seducer left me. Then was "the prey taken from the hand of the mighty, and the lawful captive delivered." My fears were at an end, and with joy and gratitude I approached my kind deliverer to receive the ring again: but he refused to return it, and spoke to this effect: if you should be intrusted with this ring again, you would very soon bring yourself into the same distress; you are not able to keep it: but I will preserve it for you, and, whenever it is needful, will produce it in your behalf."—Upon this I awoke in a state of mind not easy to be described: I could hardly eat, or sleep,

or transact my necessary business, for two or three days. But the impression soon wore off, and in a little time I totally forgot it; and I think it hardly occurred to my mind again, till several years afterwards. It will appear in the course of these papers, that a time came, when I found myself in circumstances very nearly resembling those suggested by this extraordinary dream, when I stood helpless and hopeless upon the brink of an awful eternity; and I doubt not that, had the eyes of my mind been then opened, I should have seen my grand enemy, who had seduced me wilfully to renounce and cast away my religious professions, and to involve myself in the most complicated crimes; I say, I should probably have seen him pleased with my agonies, and waiting for a permission to seize and bear away my soul to his place of torment. I should perhaps have seen likewise, that Jesus, whom I had persecuted and defied, rebuking the adversary, challenging me for his own, as a brand plucked out of the fire, and saying, "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom." However, though I saw not these things, I found the benefit; I obtained mercy. The Lord answered for me in the day of my distress; and blessed be his name, he who restored the ring, (or what was signified by it,) vouchsafes to keep it. O what an unspeakable comfort is this, that I am not in my own keeping! "The Lord is my shepherd." I have been enabled to trust my all in his hands; and I know in whom I have believed. Satan still desires to have me, that he might sift me as wheat; but my Saviour has prayed for me, that my faith may not fail. Here is my security and power; a bulwark against which the gates of hell cannot prevail.—But for this, many a time and often (if possible) I should have ruined myself since my first deliverance: nay, I should fall, and stumble, and perish still, after all that the Lord has

done for me, if his faithfulness were not engaged in my behalf, to be my sun and shield even unto death.—“Bless the Lord, O my soul.”

Nothing very remarkable occurred in the following part of that voyage. I returned home December, 1743, and soon after repeated my visit to Kent, where I protracted my stay in the same imprudent manner I had done before; which again disappointed my father's designs in my favour, and almost provoked him to disown me. Before any thing suitable offered again, I was impressed, (owing entirely to my own thoughtless conduct, which was all of a piece,) and put on board a tender: it was at a critical juncture, when the French fleets were hovering upon our coast, so that my father was unable to procure my release. In a few days I was sent on board the Harwich man-of-war, at the Nore: I entered here upon quite a new scene of life, and endured much hardship for about a month. My father was then willing that I should remain in the navy, as a war was daily expected, and procured me a recommendation to the captain, who took me upon the quarter-deck as a midshipman. I had now an easy life as to externals, and might have gained respect; but my mind was unsettled, and my behaviour very indifferent. I here met with companions who completed the ruin of my principles; and though I affected to talk of virtue, and was not so outwardly abandoned as afterwards, yet my delight and habitual practice was wickedness. My chief intimate was a person of exceedingly good natural talents, and much observation; he was the greatest master of what is called *the free-thinking scheme* I remember to have met with, and knew how to insinuate his sentiments in the most plausible way.—And his zeal was equal to his address; he could hardly have laboured more in the cause, if he had expected to gain heaven by it. Allow me to add, while I think of it, that this man whom I honoured as my master,

and whose practice I adopted so eagerly, perished in the same way as I expected to have done. I have been told, that he was overtaken in a voyage from Lisbon, by a violent storm; the vessel and people escaped, but a great sea broke on board, and swept him into eternity. Thus the Lord spares or punishes according to his sovereign pleasure!—But to return: I was fond of his company; and having myself a smattering of books, was eager enough to shew my reading. He soon perceived my case, that I had not wholly broken through the restraints of conscience, and therefore did not shock me at first with too broad intimations of his design; he rather, as I thought, spoke favourably of religion; but when he had gained my confidence, he began to speak plainer; and perceiving my ignorant attachment to the *Characteristics*, he joined issue with me upon that book, and convinced me, that I had never understood it. In a word, he so plied me with objections and arguments, that my depraved heart was soon gained, and I entered into his plan with all my spirit. Thus, like an unwary sailor, who quits his port just before a rising storm, I renounced the hopes and comforts of the gospel, at the very time when every other comfort was about to fail me.

In December, 1744, the Harwich was in the Downs, bound to the East Indies. The captain gave me liberty to go on shore for a day; but without consulting prudence, or regarding consequences, I took horse, and following the dictates of my restless passion, I went to take a last leave of her I loved. I had little satisfaction in the interview, as I was sensible that I was taking pains to multiply my own troubles. The short time I could stay passed like a dream, and on New-year's day, 1745, I took my leave to return to the ship. The captain was prevailed on to excuse my absence; but this rash step (especially as it was not the first liberty of the kind I had taken) highly dis-

pleased him, and lost me his favour, which I never recovered.

At length we sailed from Spithead with a very large fleet. We put into Torbay with a change of wind; but it returning fair again, we sailed the next day. Several of our fleet were lost in attempting to leave that place; but the following night the whole fleet was greatly endangered upon the coast of Cornwall, by a storm from the southward. The darkness of the night, and the number of the vessels, occasioned much confusion and damage. Our ship, though several times in imminent danger of being run down by other vessels, escaped unhurt; but many suffered much, particularly the Admiral. This occasioned our putting back to Plymouth.

While we lay at Plymouth, I heard that my father, who had interest in some of the ships lately lost, was come down to Torbay. He had a connection at that time with the African Company. I thought, if I could get to him, he might easily introduce me into that service, which would be better than pursuing a long uncertain voyage to the East Indies. It was a maxim with me in those unhappy days, *Never to deliberate*: the thought hardly occurred to me, but I was resolved to leave the ship at all events; I did so, and in the wrongest manner possible. I was sent one day in the boat, to take care that none of the people deserted; but I betrayed my trust, and went off myself. I knew not what road to take, and durst not ask, for fear of being suspected; yet having some general idea of the country, I guessed right, and when I had travelled some miles, I found upon inquiry, that I was on the road to Dartmouth. All went smoothly that day, and part of the next; I walked apace, and expected to have been with my father in about two hours, when I was met by a small party of soldiers. I could not avoid or deceive them. They brought me back to Plymouth; I walked through



the streets guarded like a felon. My heart was full of indignation, shame, and fear. I was confined two days in the guard-house, then sent on board my ship, kept a while in irons, then publicly stripped and whipped; after which I was degraded from my office, and all my former companions forbidden to shew me the least favour, or even to speak to me. As midshipman I had been entitled to some command, which (being sufficiently haughty and vain) I had not been backward to exert. I was now in my turn brought down to a level with the lowest, and exposed to the insults of all.

And, as my present situation was uncomfortable, my future prospects were still worse; the evils I suffered were likely to grow heavier every day. While my catastrophe was recent, the officers, and my quondam brethren, were something disposed to screen me from ill-usage; but during the little time I remained with them afterwards, I found them cool very fast in their endeavours to protect me. Indeed they could not avoid it, without running a great risk of sharing with me; for the captain, though in general a humane man, who behaved very well to the ship's company, was almost implacable in his resentment when he had been greatly offended, and took several occasions to shew himself so to me; and the voyage was expected to be (as it proved) for five years. Yet I think nothing I either felt or feared distressed me so much as to see myself thus forcibly torn away from the object of my affections under a great improbability of seeing her again, and a much greater of returning in such a manner as would give me hopes of seeing her mine. Thus I was as miserable on all hands as could well be imagined. My breast was filled with the most excruciating passions, eager desire, bitter rage, and black despair. Every hour exposed me to some new insult and hardship, with no hope of relief or mitigation; no friend to take my part, or to listen to

my complaint. Whether I looked inward or outward, I could perceive nothing but darkness and misery. I think no case, except that of a conscience wounded by the wrath of God, could be more dreadful than mine: I cannot express with what wishfulness and regret I cast my last look upon the English shore: I kept my eyes fixed upon it, till the ship's distance increasing, it insensibly disappeared; and when I could see it no longer, I was tempted to throw myself into the sea, which (according to the wicked system I had adopted) would put a period to all my sorrows at once. But the secret hand of God restrained me. Help me to praise him, dear Sir, for his wonderful goodness to the most unworthy of all his creatures.

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#### LETTER IV.

THOUGH I desired your instructions as to the manner and extent of these memoirs, I began to write before I received them, and had almost finished the preceding sheet when your favour of the 11th came to hand. I shall find another occasion to acknowledge my sense of your kind expressions of friendship, which I pray the Lord I may never give you cause to repent of, or withdraw; at present I shall confine myself to what more particularly relates to the task assigned me. I shall obey you, sir, in taking notice of the little incidents you recall to my memory, and of others of the like nature, which, without your direction, I should have thought too trivial and too much my own to deserve mentioning. When I began the eight letters, I intended to say no more of myself than might be necessary to illustrate the wonders of divine providence and grace in the leading turns of my life; but I account your judgment a sufficient warrant for enlarging my plan.

Amongst other things, you desired a more explicit account of the state and progress of my courtship, as it is usually phrased. This was the point in which I thought it especially became me to be very brief; but I submit to you; and this seems a proper place to resume it, by telling you how it stood at the time of my leaving England. When my inclinations first discovered themselves, both parties were so young, that no one but myself considered it in a serious view. It served for tea-table talk amongst our friends; and nothing farther was expected from it. But afterwards, when my passion seemed to have abiding effects, so that in an interval of two years it was not at all abated, and especially as it occasioned me to act without any regard to prudence or interest, or my father's designs; and as there was a coolness between him and the family, her parents began to consider it as a matter of consequence; and when I took my last leave of them, her mother, at the same time that she expressed the most tender affection for me, as if I had been her own child, told me, that though she had no objections to make, upon a supposition, that at a maturer age there should be a probability of our engaging upon a prudent prospect, yet as things then stood, she thought herself obliged to interfere; and therefore desired I would no more think of returning to their house, unless her daughter was from home, till such time as I could either prevail with myself entirely to give up my pretensions, or could assure her that I had my father's express consent to go on. Much depended on Mrs. N—'s part in this affair; it was something difficult; but thought she was young, gay, and quite unpractised in such matters, she was directed to a happy medium. A positive encouragement, or an absolute refusal, would have been attended with equal, though different disadvantages. But without much studying about it, I found her always upon her guard: she had penetration to see her absolute power over me, and prudence

to make a proper use of it; she would neither understand my hints, nor give me room to come to a direct explanation. She has said since, that from the first discovery of my regard, and long before, the thought was agreeable to her, she had often an unaccountable impression upon her mind, that sooner or later she should be mine. Upon these terms we parted.

I now return to my voyage. During our passage to Madeira, I was a prey to the most gloomy thoughts. Though I had well deserved all I met with, and the captain might have been justified if he had carried his resentment still further; yet my pride at that time suggested that I had been grossly injured: and this so far wrought upon my wicked heart, that I actually formed designs against his life; and this was one reason that made me willing to prolong my own. I was sometimes divided between the two, not thinking it practicable to effect both. The Lord had now to appearance given me up to judicial hardness; I was capable of any thing. I had not the least fear of God before my eyes, nor (so far as I remember) the least sensibility of conscience. I was possessed of so strong a spirit of delusion, that I believed my own lie, and was firmly persuaded, that after death I should cease to be. Yet the Lord preserved me! Some intervals of sober reflection would at times take place: when I have chosen death rather than life, a ray of hope would come in, (though there was little probability for such a hope) that I should yet see better days; that I might again return to England, and have my wishes crowned, if I did not wilfully throw myself away. In a word, my love to Mrs. N— was now the only restraint I had left. Though I neither feared God, nor regarded men, I could not bear that she should think meanly of me when I was dead. As in the outward concerns of life, the weakest means are often employed by Divine Providence to produce great effects, beyond their common influence (as when a disease for instance, has

been removed by a fright), so I found it then ; this single thought, which had not restrained me from a thousand smaller evils, proved my only and effectual barrier against the greatest and most fatal temptations. How long I could have supported this conflict, or what, humanly speaking, would have been the consequences of my continuing in that situation, I cannot say ; but the Lord, whom I little thought of, knew my danger, and was providing for my deliverance.

Two things I had determined when at Plymouth ; that I would *not* go to India, and that I *would* go to Guinea ; and such indeed was the Lord's will concerning me ; but they were to be accomplished in his way, not in my own. We had been now at Madeira some time : the business of the fleet was completed, and we were to sail the following day. On that memorable morning, I was late in bed, and had slept longer, but that one of the midshipmen (an old companion) came down, and, between jest and earnest, bade me rise ; and as I did not immediately comply, he cut down the hammock, or bed in which I lay : which forced me to dress myself. I was very angry, but durst not resent it. I was little aware how much his caprice affected me ; and that this person, who had no design in what he did, was the messenger of God's providence. I said little, but went upon deck ; where I that moment saw a man putting his clothes into a boat, who told me he was going to leave us. Upon inquiring, I was informed, that two men, from a Guinea-ship, which lay near us, had entered on board the Harwich, and that the commodore (Sir George Pocock) had ordered the captain to send two others in their room. My heart instantly burned like fire. I begged the boat might be detained a few minutes : I ran to the lieutenant, and intreated them to intercede with the captain, that I might be dismissed. Upon this occasion, though I had been formerly upon ill terms with these officers,

and had disoblged them all in their turns; yet they had pitied my case, and were ready to serve me now. The captain, who, when we were at Plymouth, had refused to exchange me, though at the request of Admiral Medly, was now easily prevailed on. I believe, in little more than half an hour from my being asleep in my bed. I saw myself discharged, and safe on board another ship. This was one of the many critical turns of my life, in which the Lord was pleased to display his providence and care, by causing many unexpected circumstances to concur in almost an instant of time. These sudden opportunities were several times repeated; each of them brought me into an entirely new scene of action, and they were usually delayed to almost the last moment in which they could have taken place.

The ship I went on board was bound to Sierra Leone, and the adjacent parts of what is called *the Windward Coast of Africa*. The commander, I found, was acquainted with my father; he received me very kindly, and made fair professions of assistance; and I believe he would have been my friend; but without making the least advantage of former mistakes and troubles, I pursued the same course; nay, if possible, I acted much worse. On board the Harwich, though my principles were totally corrupted yet, as upon my first going there, I was in some degree staid and serious, the remembrance of this made me ashamed of breaking out in that notorious manner I could otherwise have indulged. But now entering amongst strangers, I could appear without disguise; and I well remember, that while I was passing from the one ship to the other, this was one reason why I rejoiced in the exchange, and one reflection I made upon the occasion, namely, "that I now might be as abandoned as I pleased, without any controul;" and from this time I was exceedingly vile indeed, little if any thing short of that animated description of an almost irrecoverable state,

which we have in 2 Pet. ii. 14. I not only sinned with a high hand myself, but made it my study to tempt and seduce others upon every occasion; nay, I eagerly sought occasion, sometimes to my own hazard and hurt. One natural consequence of this carriage was, a loss of the favour of my new captain; not that he was at all religious, or disliked my wickedness any further than it affected his interest, but I became careless and disobedient: I did not please him, because I did not intend it, and as he was a man of an odd temper likewise, we the more easily disagreed. Besides, I had a little of that unlucky wit, which can do little more than multiply troubles and enemies to its possessor; and, upon some imagined affront, I made a song, in which I ridiculed his ship, his designs, and his person, and soon taught it to the whole ship's company. Such was the ungrateful return I made for his offers of friendship and protection. I had mentioned no names; but the allusion was plain: and he was no stranger either to the intention or the author. I shall say no more of this part of my story; let it be buried in eternal silence. But let me not be silent from the praise of that grace which could pardon, that blood which could expiate, such sins as mine. Yea, "the Ethiopian may change his skin, and the leopard his spots," since I, who was the willing slave of every evil, possessed with a legion of unclean spirits, have been spared, and saved, and changed, to stand as a monument of his almighty power for ever.

Thus I went on for about six months, by which time the ship was preparing to leave the coast. A few days before she sailed the captain died. I was not upon much better terms with his mate, who now succeeded to the command, and had, upon some occasion, treated me ill. I made no doubt but if I went with him to the West Indies, he would put me on board a man of war; and this, from what I had known already, was more dreadful to me than death. To avoid it, I

determined to remain in Africa; and amused myself with many golden dreams, that here I should find an opportunity of improving my fortune.

There are still upon that part of the coast a few white men settled, (and there were many more at the time I was first there), whose business it was to purchase slaves, &c. in the rivers and country adjacent, and sell them to the ships at an advanced price. One of these, who at first landed in my indigent circumstances, had acquired considerable wealth: he had lately been in England, and was returning in the vessel I was in, of which he owned a quarter part. His example impressed me with hopes of the same success; and, upon condition of entering into his service, I obtained my discharge. I had not the precaution to make my terms, but trusted to his generosity. I received no compensation for my time on board the ship, but a bill upon the owners in England; which was never paid, for they failed before my return. The day the vessel sailed, I landed upon the island of Benanoes, with little more than the clothes upon my back, as if I had escaped shipwreck.

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## LETTER V.

THERE seems an important instruction, and of frequent use, in these words of our dear Lord, "Mine hour is not yet come." The two following years, of which I am now to give some account, will seem as an absolute blank in a very short life: but as the Lord's hour of grace was not yet come, I was to have still deeper experience of the dreadful state of the heart of man when left to itself. I have seen frequent cause since to admire the mercy of the Lord, in banishing me to those distant parts, and almost excluding me from human society at a time when I was big with



mischief, and, like one infected with a pestilence, was capable of spreading a taint wherever I went. Had my affairs taken a different turn; had I succeeded in my designs, and remained in England, my sad story would probably have been worse. Worse in myself, indeed, I could have hardly been; but my wickedness would have had greater scope; I might have been very hurtful to others, and multiplied irreparable evils. But the Lord wisely placed me where I could do little harm. The few I had to converse with were too much like myself, and I was soon brought into such abject circumstances, that I was too low to have any influence. I was rather shunned and despised than imitated; there being few, even of the negroes themselves, (during the first year of my residence among them) but thought themselves too good to speak to me. I was as yet an "outcast lying in my blood," (Ezek. xvi. 6.) and, to all appearance, exposed to perish. But the Lord beheld me with mercy, He did not strike me to hell, as I justly deserved; "he passed by me when I was in my blood, and said unto me, Live." But the appointed time for the manifestation of his love, to cover all my iniquities with the robe of his righteousness, and to admit me to the privileges of his children, was not till long afterwards; yet even now he bade me *live*; and I can only ascribe it to his secret upholding power, that what I suffered in a part of this interval, did not bereave me either of my life or senses; yet, as by these sufferings the force of my evil example and inclination was lessened, I have reason to account them amongst my mercies.

It may not, perhaps, be amiss to digress for a few lines, and give you a very brief sketch of the geography of the circuit I was now confined to, especially as I may have frequent occasion to refer to places I shall now mention; for my trade afterwards, when the Lord gave me to see better days, was chiefly to the same places, and with the same persons, where and

by whom I had been considered as upon a level with their meanest slaves. From Cape de Verd, the most western point of Africa, to Cape Mount, the whole coast is full of rivers; the principal are, Gambia, Rio Grande, Sierra Leone, and Sherbro. Of the former, as it is well known, and I was never there, I need say nothing. The Rio Grande (like the Nile) divides into many branches near the sea. On the most northerly, called *Cacheo*, the Portuguese have a settlement. The most southern branch, known by the name of *Rio Nuna*, is, or then was, the usual boundary of the white men's trade northward. Sierra Leone is a mountainous peninsula, uninhabited, and I believe, inaccessible, upon account of the thick woods, excepting those parts which lie near the water. The river is large and navigable. From hence, about twelve leagues to the south-east, are three contiguous islands, called the *Benanoes*, about twenty miles in circuit; this was about the centre of the white men's residence. Seven leagues farther, the same way, lie the *Plantanes*, three small islands, two miles distant from the continent at the point, which forms one side of the Sherbro. This river is more properly a *sound*, running within a long island, and receiving the confluence of several large rivers, "*rivers unknown to song*," but far more deeply engraven in my remembrance than the Po or Tyber. The southernmost of these has a very peculiar course, almost parallel to the coast; so that in tracing it, a great many leagues upwards, it will seldom lead one above three miles, and sometimes not more than half a mile from the sea-shore. Indeed, I know not but that all these rivers may have communications with each other, and with the sea in many places, which I have not remarked. If you cast your eyes upon a large map of Africa while you are reading this, you will have a general idea of the country I was in: for though the maps are very incorrect, most of the places

I have mentioned are inserted, and in the same order as I have named them.

My new master had formerly resided near Cape Mount, but now he settled at the Plantanes, upon the largest of the three islands. It is a low sandy island, about two miles in circumference, and almost covered with palm-trees. We immediately began to build a house, and to enter upon trade. I had now some desire to retrieve my lost time, and to exert diligence in what was before me : and he was a man with whom I might have lived tolerably well, if he had not been soon influenced against me : but he was much under the direction of a black woman, who lived with him as a wife. She was a person of some consequence in her own country, and he owed his first rise to her interest. This woman (I know not for what reason) was strangely prejudiced against me from the first ; and what made it still worse for me, was a severe fit of illness, which attacked me very soon, before I had opportunity to shew what I could or would do in his service. I was sick when he sailed in a shallop to Rio Nuna, and he left me in her hands. At first I was taken some care of ; but as I did not recover very soon, she grew weary, and entirely neglected me. I had sometimes not a little difficulty to procure a draught of cold water when burning with a fever. My bed was a mat spread upon a board or chest, and a log of wood my pillow. When my fever left me, and my appetite returned, I would gladly have eaten, but there was no one gave unto me. She lived in plenty herself, but hardly allowed me sufficient to sustain life, except now and then, when in the highest good humour, she would send me victuals in her own plate after she had dined ; and this (so greatly was my pride humbled) I received with thanks and eagerness, as the most needy beggar does an alms. Once, I well remember, I was called to receive this bounty from her own hand ; but being

exceeding weak and feeble, I dropped the plate. Those who live in plenty can hardly conceive how this loss touched me; but she had the cruelty to laugh at my disappointment; and though the table was covered with dishes, (for she lived much in the European manner), she refused to give me any more. My distress has been at times so great, as to compel me to go by night, and pull up roots in the plantation, (though at the risk of being punished as a thief,) which I have eaten raw upon the spot, for fear of discovery. The roots I speak of are very wholesome food, when boiled or roasted; but as unfit to be eaten raw in any quantity as a potatoe. The consequence of this diet, which, after the first experiment, I always expected, and seldom missed, was the same as if I had taken *tartur emetic*; so that I have often returned as empty as I went: yet necessity urged me to repeat the trial several times. I have sometimes been relieved by strangers; nay, even by the slaves in the chain, who have secretly brought me victuals (for they durst not be seen to do it) from their own slender pittance. Next to pressing want, nothing sits harder upon the mind than *scorn* and *contempt*; and of this likewise I had an abundant measure. When I was very slowly recovering, this woman would sometimes pay me a visit, not to pity or relieve, but to insult me. She would call me worthless and indolent, and compel me to walk; which, when I could hardly do, she would set her attendants to mimic my motion, to clap their hands, laugh, and throw limes at me; or, if they chose, to throw stones, (as I think was the case once or twice) they were not rebuked; but in general, though all who depended on her favour must join in her treatment, yet, when she was out of sight, I was rather pitied than scorned by the meanest of her slaves. At length my master returned from his voyage. I complained of ill usage; but he could not believe me: and as I did it in her hearing, I fared no better for it. But in his second

voyage, he took me with him. We did pretty well for awhile, till a brother-trader he met in the river persuaded him that I was unfaithful, and stole his goods in the night, or when he was on shore. This was almost the only vice I could not be justly charged with: the only remains of a good education I could boast of was what is commonly called *honesty*; and, as far as he had intrusted me, I had been always faithful; and though my great distress might, in some measure, have excused it, I never once thought of defrauding him in the smallest matter. However, the charge was believed, and I was condemned without evidence. From that time he likewise used me very hardly: whenever he left the vessel, I was locked upon deck, with a pint of rice for my day's allowance; and if he staid longer, I had no relief till his return. Indeed, I believe, I should have been nearly starved, but for an opportunity of catching fish sometimes. When fowls were killed for his own use, I seldom was allowed any part but the entrails to bait my hooks with: and at what we call *slack water*, that is about the changing of the tides, when the current was still, I used generally to fish, (for at other times it was not practicable) and I very often succeeded. If I saw a fish upon my hook, my joy was little less than any other person may have found in the accomplishment of the scheme he had most at heart. Such a fish, hastily broiled, or rather half burnt, without sauce, salt, or bread, has afforded me a delicious meal. If I caught none, I might (if I could) sleep away my hunger till the next return of slack water, and then try again. Nor did I suffer less from the inclemency of the weather, and the want of clothes. The rainy season was now advancing; my whole suit was a shirt, a pair of trowsers, a cotton handkerchief instead of a cap, and a cotton cloth, about two yards long, to supply the want of upper garments; and thus accoutred, I have been exposed for twenty, thirty, perhaps nearly forty hours together, in incessant

rains, accompanied with strong gales of wind, without the least shelter, when my master was on shore. I feel to this day some faint returns of the violent pains I then contracted. The excessive cold and wet I endured in that voyage, and so soon after I had recovered from a long sickness, quite broke my constitution and my spirits. The latter were soon restored; but the effects of the former still remain with me, as a needful *memento* of the service and wages of sin.

In about two months we returned, and then the rest of the time I remained with him was chiefly spent at the Plantanes, under the same regimen as I have already mentioned. My haughty heart was now brought down; not to a wholesome repentance, nor to the language of the prodigal; this was far from me; but my spirits were sunk; I lost all resolution, and almost all reflection. I had lost the fierceness which fired me on board the Harwich, and which made me capable of the most desperate attempts; but I was no farther changed than a tiger tamed by hunger: remove the occasion and he will be as wild as ever.

One thing, though strange, is most true. Though destitute of food and clothing, depressed to a degree beyond common wretchedness, I could sometimes collect my mind to mathematical studies. I had bought *Barrow's Euclid* at Plymouth; it was the only volume I brought on shore; it was always with me, and I used to take it to remote corners of the island by the sea-side, and drew my *diagrams* with a long stick upon the sand. Thus I often beguiled my sorrows, and almost forgot my feeling: and thus, without any other assistance, I made myself, in a good measure, master of the first six books of *Euclid*.

## LETTER VI.

THERE is much piety and spirit in the grateful acknowledgment of Jacob, "With my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands." These are words which ought to affect me with a peculiar emotion. I remember that some of those mournful days to which my last letter refers, I was busied in planting some *lime* or *lemon-trees*. The plants I put in the ground were no longer than a young gooseberry-bush: my master and his mistress passing by the place, stopped awhile to look at me: at last, "Who knows," says he, "who knows, but by the time these trees grow up and bear, you may go home to England, obtain the command of a ship, and return to reap the fruits of your labours? We see strange things sometimes happen." This, as he intended it, was a cutting sarcasm. I believe he thought it full as probable that I should live to be king of Poland. Yet it proved a prediction, and they (one of them at least) lived to see me return from England, in the capacity he had mentioned, and pluck some of the first limes from those very trees. How can I proceed in my relation, till I raise a monument to the Divine Goodness, by comparing the circumstances in which the Lord has since placed me, with what I was at that time! Had you seen me, sir, then go, pensive and solitary, in the dead of night, to wash my one shirt upon the rocks, and afterwards put it on wet, that it might dry upon my back, while I slept; had you seen me so poor a figure, that when a ship's boat came to the island, shame often constrained me to hide myself in the woods from the sight of strangers: especially had you known that my conduct, principles, and heart, were still darker than my outward condition; how little would you have imagined, that one who so fully answered to the description of the apostle, hateful, and hating one another, was reserved to be so

peculiar an instance of the providential care and exuberant goodness of God! There was, at that time, but one earnest desire in my heart which was not contrary and shocking both to religion and reason: that *one* desire, though my vile licentious life rendered me peculiarly unworthy of success, and though a thousand difficulties seemed to render it impossible, the Lord was pleased to gratify. But this favour, though great, and greatly prized, was a small thing, compared to the blessings of his grace: he spared me, to give me "the knowledge of himself in the person of Jesus Christ." In love to my soul, he delivered me from the pit of corruption, and cast all my aggravated sins behind his back. He brought my feet into the paths of peace. This is, indeed, the chief article, but it is not the whole. When he made me acceptable to himself in the Beloved, he gave me favour in the sight of others. He raised me new friends, protected and guided me through a long series of dangers, and crowned every day with repeated mercies. To him I owe it that I am still alive, and that I am not still living in hunger and in thirst, and in nakedness, and the want of all things: into that state I brought myself; but it was He who delivered me. He has given me an easy situation in life, some experimental knowledge of his gospel, a large acquaintance amongst his people, a friendship and correspondence with several of his most honoured servants. But it is as difficult to enumerate my present advantages, as it is fully to describe the evils and miseries of the preceding contrast.

I know not exactly how long things continued with me thus, but I believe nearly a twelvemonth. In this interval I wrote two or three times to my father: I gave him an account of my condition, and desired his assistance; intimating at the same time, that I had resolved not to return to England unless he was pleased to send for me. I have likewise by me letters written to Mrs. N—in that dismal period: so that at the lowest



ebb, it seems I still retained a hope of seeing her again. My father applied to his friend in Liverpool, of whom I have spoken before; who gave orders accordingly, to a captain of his who was then fitting out for Gambia and Sierra Leone.

Some time within the year, as I have said, I obtained my master's consent to live with another trader who dwelt upon the same island. Without his consent I could not be taken; and he was unwilling to do it sooner; but it was then brought about. This was an alteration much to my advantage: I was soon decently clothed, lived in plenty, was considered as a companion, and trusted with the care of all his domestic effects, which were to the amount of some thousand pounds. This man had several factories and white servants in different places; particularly one in Kittam, the river I spoke of, which runs so nearly along the sea-coast. I was soon appointed to go there, where I had a share in the management of business, jointly with another of his servants. We lived as we pleased, business flourished, and our employer was satisfied. Here I began to be wretch enough to think myself *happy*. There is a significant phrase frequently used in those parts, That such a white man is grown *black*. It does not intend an alteration of complexion, but disposition. I have known several, who, settling in Africa after the age of thirty or forty, have at that time of life, been gradually assimilated to the tempers, customs, and ceremonies of the natives, so far as to prefer that country to England: they have even become dupes to all the pretended charms, necromancies, amulets, and divinations of the blinded negroes, and put more trust in such things than the wiser sort among the natives. A part of this spirit of infatuation was growing upon me, (in time, perhaps, I might have yielded to the whole); I entered into closer engagements with the inhabitants; and should have lived and died a wretch

amongst them, if the Lord had not watched over me for good. Not that I had lost those ideas which chiefly engaged my heart to England, but despair of seeing them accomplished made me willing to remain where I was. I thought I could more easily bear the disappointment in this situation than nearer home. But as soon as I had fixed my connections and plans with these views, the Lord providentially interposed to break them in pieces, and to save me from ruin in spite of myself.

In the mean time the ship that had orders to bring me home arrived at Sierra Leone. The captain made inquiry for me there, and at the Benanoes; but understanding that I was at a great distance in the country, he thought no more about me. Without doubt, the hand of God directed my being placed at Kittam just at this time; for, as the ship came no nearer than the Benanoes, and stayed but a few days, if I had been at the Plantanes, I should not perhaps have heard of her till she had sailed. The same must have certainly been the event had I been sent to any other factory, of which my new master had several upon different rivers. But though the place I was at was a long way upon a river, much more than a hundred miles distance from the Plantanes, yet, by the peculiar situation which I have already noticed, I was still within a mile of the sea-coast. To make the interposition more remarkable, I was at that very juncture going in quest of trade, to a place at some distance directly from the sea: and should have set out a day or two before, but that we waited for a few articles from the next ship that offered, to complete the assortment of goods I was to take with me. We used sometimes to walk on the beach, in expectation of seeing a vessel pass by, but this was very precarious, as at this time the place was not at all resorted to by ships for trade. Many passed in the night, others kept at a considerable distance from the shore.

In a word, I do not know that any one had stopped while I was there, though some had before, upon observing a signal made from the shore. In February, 1747 (I know not the exact day), my fellow-servant walking down to the beach in the forenoon, saw a vessel sailing past, and made a smoke in token of trade. She was already a little beyond the place; and as the wind was fair, the captain was in some demur whether to stop or not. However, had my companion been half an hour later, she would have been gone beyond recall; but he soon saw her come to an anchor, and went on board in a canoe; and this proved the very ship I have spoken of. One of the first questions he was asked was concerning me; and when the captain understood I was so near, he came on shore to deliver his message. Had an invitation from home reached me when I was sick and starving at the Plantanes, I should have received it as life from the dead; but now, for the reasons already given, I heard it at first with indifference. The captain, unwilling to lose me, told a story altogether of his own framing: he gave me a very plausible account how he had missed a large packet of letters and papers which he should have brought with him, but this he said he was sure of, having had it from my father's own mouth, as well as from his employer, that a person lately dead had left me £400 a year, adding further, that if I was any way embarrassed in my circumstances, he had express orders to redeem me, though it should cost one-half of his cargo: every particular of this was false; nor could I myself believe what he said about the estate; but as I had some expectation from an aged relation, I thought a part of it might be true. But I was not long in suspense: for though my father's care and desire to see me had too little weight with me, and would have been insufficient to make me quit my retreat, yet the remembrance of Mrs. N—, the hope of seeing her, and the possibility that

accepting this offer might once more put me in a way of gaining her hand, prevailed over all other considerations. The captain further promised (and in this he kept his word), that I should lodge in his cabin, dine at his table, and be his constant companion, without expecting any service from me. And thus I was suddenly freed from a captivity of about fifteen months. I had neither a thought nor a desire of this change one hour before it took place. I embarked with him, and in a few hours lost sight of Kittam.

How much is their blindness to be pitied, who can see nothing but chance in events of this sort! so blind and stupid was I at that time: I made no reflection, I sought no direction in what had happened: like a wave of the sea driven with the wind, and tossed, I was governed by present appearances, and looked no farther. But He who is eyes to the blind, was leading me in a way that I knew not.

Now I am in some measure enlightened, I can easily perceive, that it is in the adjustment and concurrence of these seemingly fortuitous circumstances, that the ruling power and wisdom of God are most evidently displayed in human affairs. How many such casual events may we remark in the history of Joseph, which had each a necessary influence on his ensuing promotion! If he had not dreamed, or if he had not told his dream; if the Midianites had passed by a day sooner, or a day later; if they had sold him to any person but Potiphar; if his mistress had been a better woman; if Pharaoh's officers had not displeased their lord; or if any, or all these things had fallen out in any other manner or time than they did, all that followed had been prevented; the promises and purposes of God concerning Israel, their bondage, deliverance, polity, and settlement, must have failed: and as all these things tended to, and centered in Christ, the promised Saviour, the desire of all nations would not have appeared. Mankind had been still in their

sins, without hope, and the counsels of God's eternal love in favour of sinners defeated. Thus we may see a connection between Joseph's first dream and the death of our Lord Christ, with all its glorious consequences. So strong, though secret, is the concatenation between the *greatest* and the *smallest* events. What a comfortable thought is this to a believer, to know, that amidst all the various interfering designs of men, the Lord has one constant design, which he cannot, will not, miss, namely, his own glory in the complete salvation of his people; and that he is wise, and strong, and faithful, to make even those things which seem contrary to this design, subservient to promote it. You have allowed me to comment upon my own text; yet the length of this observation may need some apology.

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## LETTER VII.

THE ship I was now on board as a passenger, was on a trading voyage for gold, ivory, dyers' wood, and bees' wax. It requires much longer time to collect a cargo of this sort, than of slaves. The captain began his trade at Gambia, had been already four or five months in Africa, and continued there a year, or thereabouts, after I was with him; in which time we ranged the whole coast as far as Cape Lopez, which lies about a degree south of the equinoctial, and more than a thousand miles farther from England than the place where I embarked. I have little to offer worthy your notice in the course of this tedious voyage. I had no business to employ my thoughts, but sometimes amused myself with mathematics: excepting this, my life when awake, was a course of most horrid impiety and profaneness. I know not that I have ever since met so daring a blasphemer: not content with common oaths and imprecations, I daily invented new ones;

so that I was often seriously reprov'd by the captain, who was himself a very passionate man, and not at all circumspect in his expressions. From the relation I at times made him of my past adventures, and what he saw of my conduct, and especially towards the close of the voyage, when he met with many disasters, he would often tell me, that to his grief he had a Jonah on board; that a curse attended me wherever I went; and that all the troubles he met with in the voyage were owing to his having taken me into the vessel. I shall omit any further particulars, and after mentioning an instance or two of the Lord's mercy to me, while I was thus defying his power and patience, I shall proceed to something more worthy your perusal.

Although I lived long in the excess of almost every other extravagance, I never was fond of drinking; and my father has often been heard to say, that while I avoided drunkenness, he should still entertain hopes of my recovery. But sometimes I would promote a drinking-bout for the sake of a frolic, as I termed it; for though I did not love the liquor, I was sold to do iniquity, and delighted in mischief. The last abominable frolic of this sort I engaged in, was in the river Gabon; the proposal and expence were my own. Four or five of us one evening sat down upon deck, to see who could hold out longest in drinking geneva and ruin alternately: a large sea-shell supplied the place of a glass. I was very unfit for a challenge of this sort: for my head was always incapable of bearing much strong drink. However, I began, and proposed the first toast, which I well remember was some imprecation against the person who should *start* first. This prov'd to be myself. My brain was soon fired. I arose and danced about the deck like a madman; and while I was thus diverting my companions, my hat went over-board. By the light of the moon, I saw the ship's boat, and eagerly threw myself over the side to get into her, that I might recover my hat. My sight in

that circumstance deceived me; for the boat was not within my reach, as I thought, but perhaps twenty feet from the ship's side. I was, however, half overboard, and should in one moment ~~more~~ have plunged myself into the water, when somebody caught hold of my clothes behind, and pulled me back. This was an amazing escape: for I could not swim if I had been sober; the tide ran very strong, my companions were too much intoxicated to save me; and the rest of the ship's company were asleep. So near was I to all appearance of perishing in that dreadful condition, and sinking into eternity under the weight of my own curse!

Another time, at Cape Lopez, some of us had been in the woods, and shot a buffalo, or wild cow; we brought a part of it on board, and carefully marked the place (as I thought) where we left the remainder. In the evening we returned to fetch it; but we set out too late. I undertook to be the guide; but night coming on before we could reach the place, we lost our way. Sometimes we were in swamps, up to the middle in water; and when we recovered dry land, we could not tell whether we were walking towards the ship, or wandering farther from her. Every step increased our uncertainty. The night grew darker, and we were entangled in inextricable woods, where, perhaps, the foot of man had never trod before. That part of the country is entirely abandoned to wild beasts, with which it prodigiously abounds. We were, indeed, in a terrible case, having neither light, food, nor arms, and expecting a tiger to rush from behind every tree. The stars were clouded, and we had no compass, to form a judgment which way we were going. Had things continued thus, we had probably perished; but it pleased God no beast came near us; and after some hours perplexity, the moon arose, and pointed out the eastern quarter. It appeared then, as we had expected, that, instead of drawing nearer to the sea-side, we had

been penetrating into the country; but by the guidance of the moon, we at length came to the water-side, a considerable distance from the ship. We got safe on board without any other inconvenience than what we suffered from fear and fatigue.

These and many other deliverances, were all at that time entirely lost upon me. The admonitions of conscience, which from successive repulses, had grown weaker and weaker, at length entirely ceased; and for a space of many months, if not for some years, I cannot recollect that I had a single check of that sort. At times I have been visited with sickness, and have believed myself near to death; but I had not the least concern about the consequences. In a word, I seemed to have every mark of final impenitence and rejection; neither judgments nor mercies made the least impression on me.

At length, our business being finished, we left Cape Lopez, and after a few days stay at the island of Annabona, to lay in provisions, we sailed homewards, about the beginning of January, 1748. From Annabona to England, without touching at any intermediate port, is a very long navigation, perhaps more than seven thousand miles, if we include the circuit necessary to be made on account of the trade-winds. We sailed first westward, till near the coast of Brazil, then northwards, to the banks of Newfoundland, with the usual variations of wind and weather, and without meeting any thing extraordinary. On these banks we stopped half a day to fish for cod: this was then chiefly for diversion; we had provisions enough and little expected those fish (as it afterwards proved) would be all we should have to subsist on. We left the banks March 1, with a hard gale of wind westerly, which pushed us fast homewards. I should here observe, that with the length of this voyage in a hot climate, the vessel was greatly out of repair, and very unfit to support stormy weather; the sails and cordage were likewise very



much worn, and many such circumstances concurred to render what followed more dangerous. I think it was on the 9th of March, the day before our catastrophe, that I felt a thought pass through my mind, which I had long been a stranger to. Among the few books we had on board, one was Stanhope's *Thomas à Kempis*: I carelessly took it up, as I had often done before, to pass away the time; but I had still read it with the same indifference as if it was entirely a romance. However, while I was reading this time, an involuntary suggestion arose in my mind, What if these things should be true? I could not bear the force of the inference, as it related to myself, and therefore shut the book presently. My conscience witnessed against me once more; and I concluded, that true or false, I must abide the consequences of my own choice. I put an abrupt end to these reflections, by joining in with some vain conversation or other that came in the way.

But now the *Lord's time was come*, and the conviction I was so unwilling to receive was deeply impressed upon me, by an awful dispensation. I went to bed that night in my usual security and indifference: but was awaked from a sound sleep by the force of a violent sea, which broke on board us. So much of it came down below as filled the cabin I lay in with water. This alarm was followed by a cry from the deck, that the ship was going down, or sinking. As soon as I could recover myself, I essayed to go upon deck; but was met upon the ladder by the captain, who desired me to bring a knife with me. While I returned for the knife, another person went up in my room, who was instantly washed overboard. We had no leisure to lament him; nor did we expect to survive him long; for we soon found the ship was filling with water very fast. The sea had torn away the upper timbers on one side, and made the ship a mere wreck in a few minutes. I shall not affect to describe this disaster in the marine

dialect, which would be understood by few; and therefore I can give you but a very inadequate idea of it. Taking in all circumstances, it was astonishing, and almost miraculous, that any of us survived to relate the story. We had immediate recourse to the pumps; but the water increased against all our efforts! some of us were set to *bailing* in another part of the vessel, that is, to lade it out with buckets and pails. We had but eleven or twelve people to sustain this service; and, notwithstanding all we could do, she was full, or very near it: and then with a common cargo she must have sunk of course: but we had a great quantity of bees'-wax and wood on board, which were specifically lighter than the water; and as it pleased God that we received this shock in the very crisis of the gale, towards morning we were enabled to employ some means for our safety, which succeeded beyond hope. In about an hour's time the day began to break, and the wind abated. We expended most of our clothes and bedding to stop the leaks, (though the weather was exceedingly cold, especially to us who had so lately left a hot climate); over these we nailed pieces of boards, and at last perceived the water abate. At the beginning of this hurry I was little affected. I pumped hard, and endeavoured to animate myself and my companions. I told one of them, that in a few days this distress would serve us to talk of over a glass of wine: but he being a less hardened sinner than myself, replied with tears, "No, it is too late now." About nine o'clock, being almost spent with cold and labour, I went to speak with the captain, who was busied elsewhere: and just as I was returning from him, I said, almost without any meaning, "If this will not do, the Lord have mercy on us!" This (though spoken with little reflection) was the first desire I had breathed for mercy for the space of many years. I was instantly struck with my own words, and as Jehu said once, *What hast thou to do with peace?* so it directly occurred,

*What mercy can there be for me?* I was obliged to return to the pump, and there I continued till noon, almost every passing wave breaking over my head; but we made ourselves fast with ropes, that we might not be washed away. Indeed I expected that every time the vessel descended in the sea, she would rise no more; and though I dreaded death *now*, and my heart foreboded the worst, if the Scriptures, which I had long since opposed, were indeed true; yet still I was but half-convinced, and remained for a space of time in a sullen frame, a mixture of despair and impatience. I thought if the Christian religion were true, I could not be forgiven; and was therefore expecting, and almost at times wishing, to know the worst of it.

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## LETTER VIII.

THE 10th (that is, in the present style, the 21st) of March, is a day much to be remembered by me, and I have never suffered it to pass wholly unnoticed since the year 1748. On that day the Lord sent from on high, and delivered me out of deep waters.—I continued at the pump from *three* in the *morning* till near *noon*, and then I could do no more. I went and lay down upon my bed, uncertain and almost indifferent, whether I should rise again. In an hour's time I was called; and not being able to pump, I went to the helm, and steered the ship till midnight, excepting a short interval for refreshment. I had here leisure and convenient opportunity for reflection. I began to think of my former religious professions, the extraordinary turns in my life; the calls, warnings, and deliverances I had met with; the licentious course of my conversation, particularly my unparalleled effrontery in making the gospel-history (which I could not then be sure was false, though I was not as yet assured it was true) the

constant subject of profane ridicule. I thought, allowing the scripture premises, there never was, nor could be, such a sinner as myself; and then, comparing the advantages I had broken through, I concluded at first, that my sins were too great to be forgiven. The scripture likewise seemed to say the same; for I had formerly been well acquainted with the Bible, and many passages upon this occasion returned upon my memory, particularly those awful passages, Prov. i. 24—31; Heb. vi. 4—6; and 2 Pet. ii. 20, which seemed so exactly to suit my case and character, as to bring with them a presumptive proof of a divine original. Thus, as I have said, I waited with fear and impatience to receive my inevitable doom. Yet though I had thoughts of this kind, they were exceedingly faint and disproportionate; it was not till long after, (perhaps several years) till I had gained some clear views of the infinite righteousness and grace of Jesus Christ my Lord, that I had a deep and strong apprehension of my state by nature and practice: and perhaps till then I could not have borne the sight. So wonderfully does the Lord proportion the discoveries of sin and grace; for he knows our frame, and that if he were to put forth the greatness of his power, a poor sinner would be instantly overwhelmed, and crushed as a moth. But to return: when I saw beyond all probability, there was still hope of respite, and heard about six in the evening that the ship was freed from water, there arose a gleam of hope; I thought I saw the hand of God displayed in our favour: I began to pray.—I could not utter the prayer of faith: I could not draw near to a reconciled God, and call him Father. My prayer was like the cry of the ravens, which yet the Lord does not disdain to hear. I now began to think of that Jesus whom I had so often derided: I recollected the particulars of his life, and of his death:—a death for sins *not his own*, but, as I remembered, for the sake of those who in their distress should put

their trust in Him. And now I chiefly wanted evidence.—The com'ortless principles of infidelity were deeply rivetted, and I rather wished than believed these things were real facts. You will please to observe, sir, that I collect the strain of the reasonings and exercises of my mind in one view; but I do not say that all this passed at one time. The great question now was, how to obtain *faith*? I speak not of an appropriating faith, (of which I then knew neither the nature nor necessity,) but how I should gain an assurance that the Scriptures were of divine inspiration, and a sufficient warrant for the exercise of trust and hope in God. One of the first helps I received (in consequence of a determination to examine the New Testament more carefully) was from Luke xi. 13. I had been sensible, that to profess faith in Jesus Christ, when in reality I did not believe his history, was no better than a mockery of the heart-searching God; but here I found a Spirit spoken of, which was to be communicated to those who ask it. Upon this I reasoned thus: if this book is true, the promise in this passage is true likewise: I have need of that very Spirit by which the whole was written, in order to understand it aright. He has engaged here to give that Spirit to those who ask. I must therefore pray for it; and if it is of God, he will make good his own word. My purposes were strengthened by John vii. 17. I concluded from thence, that though I could not say from my heart that I believed the gospel, yet I would for the present take it for granted, and that by studying it in this light I should be more and more confirmed in it. If what I am writing could be perused by our modern infidels, they would say, (for I too well know their manner) that I was very desirous to persuade myself into this opinion. I confess I was; and so would they be, if the Lord should shew them, as he was pleased to shew me at that time, the absolute necessity of some expedient to interpose between a righteous God and a

sinful soul. Upon the gospel-scheme I saw at least a peradventure of hope, but on every other side I was surrounded with black unfathomable despair.

The wind was now moderate, but continued fair, and we were still drawing nearer to our port. We began to recover from our consternation, though we were greatly alarmed by our circumstances. We found that the water having floated all our moveables in the hold, all the casks of provision had been beaten to pieces by the violent motion of the ship; on the other hand, our live stock, such as pigs, sheep, and poultry, had been washed overboard in the storm. In effect, all the provisions we saved, except the fish I mentioned, and some food of the pulse kind, which used to be given to the hogs, (and there was but little of this left,) all our other provisions would have subsisted us but a week at scanty allowance. The sails, too, were mostly blown away, so that we advanced but slowly even while the wind was fair. We imagined ourselves about a hundred leagues from the land, but were in reality much farther. Thus we proceeded with an alternate prevalence of hopes and fears. My leisure time was chiefly employed in reading and meditating on the scripture, and praying to the Lord for mercy and instruction.

Things continued thus for four or five days, or perhaps longer, till we were awakened one morning by the joyful shouts of the watch upon deck proclaiming the sight of land. We were all soon raised at the sound. The dawning was uncommonly beautiful, and the light (just strong enough to discover distant objects) presented us with a gladdening prospect: it seemed a mountainous coast, about twenty miles from us, terminating in a Cape, or point, and a little further, two or three small islands, or hummocks, as just rising out of the water; the appearance and position seemed exactly answerable to our hopes, resembling the north-west extremity of Ireland, which we were

steering for. We sincerely congratulated each other, making no doubt but that if the wind continued, we should be in safety and plenty the next day. The small remainder of our brandy (which was reduced to little more than a pint) was, by the captain's orders, distributed amongst us; he added, at the same time, "We shall soon have brandy enough." We likewise ate up the residue of our bread for joy at this welcome sight, and were in the condition of men suddenly reprieved from death. While we were thus alert, the mate, with a graver tone than the rest, sunk our spirits, by saying, "that he wished it might prove land at last." If one of the common sailors had first said so, I know not but the rest would have beat him for raising such an unreasonable doubt. It brought on, however, warm debates and disputes, whether it was land or not: but the case was soon unanswerably decided; for the day was advancing fast; and in a little time one of our fancied islands began to grow red from the approach of the sun, which soon arose just under it. In a word, we had been prodigal of our bread and brandy too hastily: our land was nothing but clouds; and in half an hour more the whole appearance was dissipated. Seamen have often known deceptions of this sort, but in our extremity we were very loth to be undeceived. However, we comforted ourselves, that though we could not see the land yet, we should soon, the wind hitherto continuing fair. But, alas! we were deprived of this hope likewise. That very day our fair wind subsided into a calm, and the next morning the gales sprung up from the south-east, directly against us, and continued so for more than a fortnight afterwards. ~~The~~ ship was so wrecked, that we were obliged to keep the wind always on the broken side, unless the weather was quite moderate. Thus we were driven, by the wind fixing in that quarter, still further from our port, to the northward of all Ireland, as far as the Lewis, or western islands of Scotland, but a long way

to the westward. In a word, our station was such as deprived us of any hope of being relieved by other vessels. It may, indeed, be questioned, whether our ship was not the very first that had been in that part of the ocean at the same season of the year.

Provisions now began to grow very short: the half of a salted cod was a day's subsistence for twelve people. We had plenty of fresh water, but not a drop of stronger liquor: no bread, hardly any clothes, and very cold weather. We had incessant labour with the pumps, to keep the ship above water. Much labour and little food wasted us fast, and one man died under the hardship. Yet our sufferings were light in comparison of our just fears. We could not afford this bare allowance much longer, but had a terrible prospect of being either starved to death, or reduced to feed upon one another. Our expectations grew darker every day; and I had a further trouble peculiar to myself. The captain, whose temper was quite soured by distress, was hourly reproaching me (as I formerly observed) as the sole cause of the calamity; and was confident, that if I was thrown overboard, and not otherwise, they should be preserved from death. He did not intend to make the experiment; but the continual repetition of this in my ears gave me much uneasiness, especially as my conscience seconded his words; I thought it very probable, that all that had befallen us was on my account. I was at last found out by the powerful hand of God, and condemned in my own breast. However, proceeding in the method I have described, I began to conceive hopes greater than all my fears; especially when at the time we were ready to give up all for lost, and despair was taking place in every countenance, I saw the wind come about to the very point we wished it, so as best to suit that broken part of the ship which must be kept out of the water, and to blow so gentle as our few remaining sails could bear; and thus it continued, without



any observable alteration or increase, though at an unsettled time of the year, till we once more were called up to see the land, and were convinced that it was land indeed. We saw the island Tory, and the next day anchored in Lough Swilly, in Ireland. This was the 8th of April, just four weeks after the damage we sustained from the sea. When we came into this port, our very last victuals were boiling in the pot; and before we had been there two hours, the wind, which seemed to have been providentially restrained till we were in a place of safety, began to blow with great violence; so that, if we had continued at sea that night in our shattered enfeebled condition, we must, in all human appearance, have gone to the bottom. About this time I began to know that there is a God that hears and answers prayer. How many times has he appeared for me since this great deliverance! Yet, alas! how distrustful and ungrateful is my heart unto this hour.

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## LETTER IX.

I HAVE brought my history down to the time of my arrival in Ireland, 1748: but before I proceed, I would look back a little, to give you some further account of the state of my mind, and how far I was helped against inward difficulties, which beset me at the time I had many outward hardships to struggle with. The straits of hunger, cold, weariness, and the fears of sinking and starving, I shared in common with others: but besides these, I felt a heart-bitterness, which was properly my own; no one on board but myself being impressed with any sense of the hand of God in our danger and deliverance, at least not awakened to any concern for their souls. No temporal dispensations can reach the heart, unless the Lord himself applies

them. My companions in danger were either quite unaffected, or soon forgot it all : but it was not so with me ; not that I was any wiser or better than they, but because the Lord was pleased to vouchsafe me peculiar mercy ; otherwise I was the most unlikely person in the ship to receive an impression, having been often before quite stupid and hardened in the very face of great dangers, and having always till this time, hardened my neck still more and more after every reproof. I can see no reason why the Lord singled me out for mercy, but this, " that so it seemed good to him ; " unless it was to shew, by one astonishing instance, that " with him nothing is impossible."

There were no persons on board to whom I could open myself with freedom concerning the state of my soul, none from whom I could ask advice. As to books, I had a New Testament, Stanhope, already mentioned, and a volume of Bishop Beveridge's Sermons, one of which, upon our Lord's Passion, affected me much. In perusing the New Testament, I was struck with several passages, particularly that of the fig-tree, Luke xiii. ; the case of St Paul, 1 Tim. i. ; but particularly the prodigal, Luke xv. ; a case I thought had never been so nearly exemplified as by myself : and then the goodness of the father in receiving, nay, in running to meet such a son, and this intended only to illustrate the Lord's goodness to returning sinners : this gained upon me. I continued much in prayer ; I saw that the Lord had interposed *so far* to save me ; and I hoped he would do more. The outward circumstances helped in this place to make me still more serious and earnest in crying to Him who alone could relieve me ; and sometimes I thought I could be content to die even for want of food, if I might but die a believer. Thus far I was answered, that before we arrived in Ireland I had a satisfactory evidence in my own mind of the truth of the gospel, as considered in itself, and its exact

suitableness to answer all my needs. I saw that, by the way there pointed out. God might declare, not his mercy only, but his justice also, in the pardon of sin, on account of the obedience and sufferings of Jesus Christ. My judgment at that time embraced the sublime doctrine of "God manifest in the flesh, reconciling the world to himself." I had no idea of those systems which allow the Saviour no higher honour than that of an *upper servant*, or at the most a *demi-god*. I stood in need of an almighty Saviour, and such a one I found described in the New Testament. Thus far the Lord had wrought a marvellous thing; I was no longer an infidel; I heartily renounced my former profaneness; I had taken up some right notions, was seriously disposed, and sincerely touched with a sense of the undeserved mercy I had received, in being brought safe through so many dangers. I was sorry for my past mis-spent life, and purposed an immediate reformation: I was quite freed from the habit of swearing, which seemed to have been deeply rooted in me as a second nature. Thus, to all appearance, I was a new man.

But though I cannot doubt that this change, so far as it prevailed, was wrought by the Spirit and power of God; yet still I was greatly deficient in many respects. I was, in some degree, affected with a sense of my more enormous sins, but I was little aware of the innate evils of my heart. I had no apprehension of the spirituality and extent of the law of God; the hidden life of a christian, as it consists in communion with God by Jesus Christ, and a continual dependance on him for hourly supplies of wisdom, strength, and comfort, was a mystery of which I had as yet no knowledge. I acknowledged the Lord's mercy in pardoning what was past, but depended chiefly upon my own resolution to do better for the time to come. I had no christian friend or faithful minister to advise me that my strength was no more than my righteousness;

and though I soon began to inquire for serious books, yet, not having spiritual discernment, I frequently made a wrong choice; and I was not brought in the way of evangelical preaching or conversation (except a few times when I heard but understood not) for six years after this period. Those things the Lord was pleased to discover to me gradually. I learnt them here a little, and there a little, by my own painful experience, at a distance from the common means and ordinances, and in the midst of the same course of evil company, and bad examples, as I had been conversant with for some time. From this period I could no more make a mock at sin, or jest with holy things; I no more questioned the truth of Scripture, or lost a sense of the rebukes of conscience. Therefore I consider this as the beginning of my return to God, or rather of his return to me; but I cannot consider myself to have been a believer (in the full sense of the word) till a considerable time afterwards.

I have told you that in the time of our distress, we had fresh water in abundance. This was a considerable relief to us, especially as our spare diet was mostly salt-fish without bread; we drank plentifully, and were not afraid of wanting water: yet our stock of this likewise was much nearer to an end than we expected; we supposed that we had six large butts of water on board; and it was well that we were safe arrived in Ireland before we discovered that five of them were empty, having been removed out of their places, and stove by the violent agitation when the ship was full of water. If we had found this out while we were at sea, it would have greatly heightened our distress, as we must have drunk more sparingly.

While the ship was refitting at Lough Swilly, I repaired to Londonderry. I lodged at an exceedingly good house, where I was treated with much kindness, and soon recruited my health and strength. I was now a serious professor, went twice a-day to the prayers at

church, and determined to receive the sacrament the next opportunity. A few days before I signified my intention to the minister, as the rubric directs; but I found this practice was grown obsolete. At length the day came: I arose very early,—was very particular and earnest in my private devotion; and, with the greatest solemnity, engaged myself to be the Lord's for ever, and only his. This was not a formal but a sincere surrender, under a warm sense of mercies recently received; and yet, for want of a better knowledge of myself, and the subtlety of Satan's temptations, I was seduced to forget the vows of God that were upon me. Upon the whole, though my views of the gospel-salvation were very indistinct, I experienced a peace and satisfaction in the ordinance that day, to which I had been hitherto a perfect stranger.

The next day I was abroad with the mayor of the city, and some other gentlemen, shooting; I climbed up a steep bank, and pulling my fowling-piece after me, as I held it in a perpendicular direction, it went off so near my face as to burn away the corner of my hat. Thus when we think ourselves in the greatest safety, we are no less exposed to danger, than when all the elements seem conspiring to destroy us. The Divine Providence, which is sufficient to deliver us in our utmost extremity, is equally necessary to our preservation in the most peaceful situation.

During our stay in Ireland I wrote home. The vessel I was in had not been heard of for eighteen months, and was given up for lost long before. My father had no more expectation of hearing that I was alive; but he received my letter a few days before he left London. He was just going Governor of York Fort, in Hudson's Bay, from whence he never returned. He sailed before I landed in England, or he had purposed to take me with him; but God designing otherwise, one hinderance or another delayed us in Ireland until it was too late. I received two or three

affectionate letters from him, but I never had the pleasure of seeing him more. I had hopes, that, in three years more, I should have had an opportunity of asking his forgiveness for the uneasiness my disobedience had given him; but the ship that was to have brought him home, came without him.\* According to the best accounts we received, he was seized with the cramp when bathing, and drowned, a little before her arrival in the bay. \*Excuse this digression.

My father, willing to contribute all in his power to my satisfaction, paid a visit before his departure to my friends in Kent, and gave his consent to the union, which had been so long talked of. Thus, when I returned to ———, I found I had only the consent of one person to obtain; with her I as yet stood at as great an uncertainty as on the first day I saw her.

I arrived at Liverpool the latter end of May, 1748, about the same day that my father sailed from the Nore; but found the Lord had provided me another father in the gentleman whose ship had brought me home. He received me with great tenderness, and the strongest expressions of friendship and assistance; yet no more than he has since made good: for to him, as the instrument of God's goodness, I owe my all. Yet it would not have been in the power, even of this friend to have served me effectually, if the Lord had not met with me on my way home, as I have related. Till then I was like the man possessed with the *legion*. No arguments, no persuasion, no views of interest, no remembrance of the past, or regard to the future, could have constrained me within the bounds of common prudence. But now I was, in some measure, restored to my senses. My friend immediately offered me the command of a ship; but, upon mature consideration, I declined it for the present. I had been hitherto always unsettled and careless; and therefore thought I had better make another voyage first, and learn to obey, and acquire a further insight and

experience in business, before I ventured to undertake such a charge. The mate of the vessel I came home in was preferred to the command of a new ship, and I engaged to go in the station of mate with him. I made a short visit to London, &c., which did not fully answer my views. I had but one opportunity of seeing Mrs. N——, of which I availed myself very little; for I always was exceedingly awkward in pleading my own cause in our conversation. But after my return to Liverpool, I put the question in such a manner, by letter, that she could not avoid (unless I had greatly mistaken her) coming to some sort of an explanation. Her answer (though penned with abundance of caution) satisfied me; as I collected from it, that she was free from any other engagement, and not unwilling to wait the event of the voyage I had undertaken. I should be ashamed to trouble you with these little details, if you had not yourself desired me.

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## LETTER X.

My connexions with sea-affairs have often led me to think, that the varieties observable in christian experience may be properly illustrated from the circumstances of a voyage. Imagine to yourself a number of vessels, at different times, and from different places, bound to the same port; there are some things in which all these would agree,—the compass steered by, the port in view, the general rules of navigation, both as to the management of the vessel and determining their astronomical observations, would be the same in all. In other respects they would differ; perhaps no two of them would meet with the same distribution of winds and weather. Some we see set out with a prosperous gale; and when they almost think their passage secured, they are checked by

adverse blasts ; and, after enduring much hardship and danger, and frequent expectations of shipwreck, they just escape, and reach the desired haven. Others meet the greatest difficulties at first ; they put forth in a storm, and are often beaten back ; at length their voyage proves favourable, and they enter the port with a rich and abundant entrance. Some are hard beset with cruisers and enemies and obliged to fight their way through, others meet with little remarkable in their passage. Is it not thus in the spiritual life ? All true believers walk by the same rule, and mind the same things ; the word of God is their compass ; Jesus is both their polar star and their sun of righteousness ; their hearts and faces are all set Sion-ward. Thus far they are as one body, animated by one spirit ; yet their experience, formed upon these common principles, is far from being uniform. The Lord, in his first call, and his following dispensations, has a regard to the situation, temper, and talents of each, and to the particular services or trials he has appointed them for. Though all are exercised at times, yet some pass through the voyage of life much more smoothly than others. But He " who walketh upon the wings of the wind, and measures the waters in the hollow of his hand," will not suffer any of whom he has once taken charge, to perish in the storms, though for a season, perhaps, many of them are ready to give up all hopes.

We must not, therefore, make the experience of others, in all respects, a rule to ourselves, nor our own a rule to others ; yet these are common mistakes, and productive of many more. As to myself, every part of my case has been extraordinary. I have hardly met a single instance resembling it. Few, very few, have been recovered from such a dreadful state ; and the few that have been thus favoured, have generally passed through the most severe convictions ; and after the Lord has given them peace, their future



lives have been usually more zealous, bright, and exemplary than common. Now, as on the one hand, my convictions were very moderate, and far below what might have been expected from the dreadful review I had to make; so, on the other, my first beginnings in a religious course were as faint as can be well imagined. I never knew that season alluded to, Jer. ii. 2; Rev. ii. 4, usually called *the time of the first love*. Who would not expect to hear, that after such a wonderful unhopèd-for deliverance as I had received, and after my eyes were in some measure enlightened to see things aright, I should immediately cleave to the Lord and his ways, with full purpose of heart, and consult no more with flesh and blood? But, alas! it was far otherwise with me. I had learned to pray: I set some value upon the word of God, and was no longer a libertine: but my soul still cleaved to the dust. Soon after my departure from Liverpool, I began to intermit, and grow slack in waiting upon the Lord; I grew vain and trifling in my conversation; and though my heart smote me often, yet my armour was gone, and I declined fast; and by the time I arrived at Guinea, I seemed to have forgot all the Lord's mercies, and my own engagements, and was (profaneness excepted) almost as bad as before. The enemy prepared a train of temptations, and I became his easy prey; and, for about a month, he lulled me asleep in a course of evil, of which, a few months before, I could not have supposed myself any longer capable. How much propriety is there in the apostle's advice, "Take heed, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin!" O, who can be sufficiently upon their guard? Sin first deceives, and then it hardens. I was now fast bound in chains; I had little desire, and no power at all, to recover myself. I could not but at times reflect how it was with me; but if I attempted to struggle with it, it was in vain. I was just like

SAMSON, when he said, "I will go forth, and shake myself as at other times;" but the Lord was departed, and he found himself helpless in the hands of his enemies. By the remembrance of this interval, the Lord has often instructed me since, what a poor creature I am in myself, incapable of standing a single hour, without continual fresh supplies of strength and grace from the fountain-head.

At length the Lord, whose mercies are infinite, interposed in my behalf. My business in this voyage, while upon the coast, was to sail from place to place in the long-boat to purchase slaves. The ship was at Sierra Leone, and I then at the Plantanes, the scene of my former captivity, where every thing I saw might seem to remind me of my ingratitude. I was in easy circumstances, courted by those who formerly despised me: the *lime-trees* I had planted were growing tall, and promised fruit the following year; against which time I had expectations of returning with a ship of my own. But none of these things affected me, till, as I have said, the Lord again interposed to save me. He visited me with a violent fever, which broke the fatal chain, and once more brought me to myself. But, O what a prospect! I thought myself now summoned away. My past dangers and deliverances, my earnest prayers in the time of trouble, my solemn vows before the Lord at his table, and my ungrateful returns for all his goodness, were all present to my mind at once. Then I began to wish, that the Lord had suffered me to sink into the ocean when I first besought his mercy. For a little while I concluded the door of hope to be quite shut; but this continued not long. Weak, and almost delirious, I arose from my bed, and crept to a retired part of the island; and here I found a renewed liberty to pray. I durst make no more resolves, but cast myself before the Lord, to do with me as he should please. I do not remember that

any particular text, or remarkable discovery, was presented to my mind; but, in general, I was enabled to hope and believe, in a crucified Saviour. The burden was removed from my conscience, and not only my peace but my health was restored; I cannot say instantaneously; but I recovered from that hour; and so fast, that when I returned to the ship, two days afterwards, I was perfectly well before I got on board. And from that time, I trust, I have been delivered from the power and dominion of sin; though, as to the effects and conflicts of sin dwelling in me, I still "groan being burdened." I now began again to wait upon the Lord; and though I have often grieved his Spirit, and foolishly wandered from him since, (when, alas! shall I be more wise?) yet his powerful grace has hitherto preserved me from such black decisions as thine I have last recorded: and I humbly trust in his mercy and promises, that he will be my guide and guard to the end.

My leisure hours in his voyage were chiefly employed in learning the Latin language, which I had now entirely forgot. This desire took place from an imitation I had seen of one of Horace's odes in a magazine. I began the attempt under the greatest disadvantages possible; for I pitched upon a poet, perhaps the most difficult of the poets, even Horace himself, for my first book. I had picked up an old English translation of him, which, with Castalio's Latin Bible, were all my helps. I forgot a Dictionary, but I would not therefore give up my purpose. I had the edition *in usum Delphini*; and, by comparing the odes with the interpretation, and tracing the words, I could understand from one place to another, by the index, with the assistance I could get from the Latin Bible: in this way, by dint of hard industry, often waking when I might have slept, I made some progress before I returned, and not only understood the sense and meaning of many odes, and

some of the Epistles, but began to relish the beauties of the composition, and acquired a spice of what Mr. Law calls *classical enthusiasm*. And indeed, by this means, I had Horace more in my mind than some who are masters of the Latin tongue; for my helps were so few, that I generally had the passage fixed in my memory, before I could fully understand its meaning.

My business in the long-boat, during the eight months we were upon the coast, exposed me to innumerable dangers and perils, from burning suns and chilling dews, winds, rains, and thunder-storms, in the open boat; and on shore, from long journies through the woods, and the temper of the natives, who are in many places cruel, treacherous, and watching opportunities for mischief. Several boats in the same time were cut off, several white men poisoned, and in my own boat, I buried six or seven people with fevers. When going on shore, or returning from it, in their little canoes, I have been more than once or twice overset by the violence of the surf, or breach of the sea, and brought to land half-dead (for I could not swim). An account of such scenes as I still remember, would swell to several sheets, and many more I have perhaps forgot: I shall only select one instance, as a specimen of that wonderful providence which watched over me for good, and which, I doubt not, you will think worthy of notice.

When our trade was finished, and we were near sailing to the West Indies, the only remaining service I had to perform in the boat, was to assist in bringing the wood and water from the shore. We were then at Rio Cestors. I used to go into the river in the afternoon with the sea-breeze, procure my loading in the evening, and return on board in the morning with the land-wind. Several of these little voyages I had made; but the boat was become old, and almost unfit for use. This service likewise was

almost completed. One day, having dined on board, I was preparing to return to the river as formerly: I had taken leave of the captain, received his orders, was ready in the boat, and just going to put off, as we term it; that is, to let go our ropes, and sail from the ship. In that instant the captain came up from the cabin, and called me on board again. I went, expecting further orders; but he said, that he *took it in his head*, (as he phrased it,) that I should remain that day in the ship; and accordingly ordered another man to go in my room. I was surprised at this, as the boat had never been sent away without me before, and asked him the reason; he could give me no reason but as above, that so he would have it. Accordingly the boat went without me; but returned no more; she sunk that night in the river, and the person who had supplied my place was drowned. I was much struck when we received news of the event the next morning. The captain himself, though quite a stranger to religion, so far as to deny a particular providence, could not help being affected; but he declared that he had no other reason for countermanding me at that time, but that it came suddenly into his mind to detain me.

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## LETTER XI.

A few days after I was thus wonderfully saved from an unforeseen danger, we sailed for Antigua, and from thence proceeded to Charlestown, in South Carolina. In this place there are many serious people; but I knew not where to find them out: indeed I was not aware of a difference, but supposed that all who attended public worship were good christians. I was as much in the dark about preaching, not doubting but whatever came from the pulpit must be very good. I had two or three opportunities of hearing a dissenting

minister, named Smith, who, by what I have known since, I believe to have been an excellent and powerful preacher of the gospel; and there was something in his manner that struck me, but I did not rightly understand him. The best words that men can speak are ineffectual till explained and applied by the Spirit of God, who alone can open the heart. It pleased the Lord, for some time, that I should learn no more than what he enabled me to collect from my own experience and reflection. My conduct was now very inconsistent. Almost every day, when business would permit, I used to retire into the woods and fields (for these, when at hand, have always been my favourite oratories), and I trust I began to taste the sweets of communion with God in the exercises of prayer and praise; and yet I frequently spent the evenings in vain and worthless company. Indeed my relish for worldly diversions was much weakened, and I was rather a spectator than a sharer in their pleasures: but I did not as yet see the necessity of an absolute forbearance. Yet as my compliance with custom and company was chiefly owing to want of light, rather than to an obstinate attachment, and the Lord was pleased to preserve me from what I *knew* was sinful, I had for the most part peace of conscience, and my strongest desires were towards the things of God. As yet I knew not the force of that precept, "Abstain from all appearance of evil;" but very often ventured upon the brink of temptation; yet the Lord was gracious to my weakness, and would not suffer the enemy to prevail against me. I did not break with the world at once, (as might in my case have been expected) but I was gradually led to see the inconvenience and folly of one thing after another; and when I saw it, the Lord strengthened me to give it up. But it was some years before I was set quite at liberty from occasional compliances in many things, in which at this time I durst by no means allow myself.

We finished our voyage, and arrived in Liverpool. When the ship's affairs were settled, I went to London, and from thence (as you may suppose) I soon repaired to Kent. More than seven years had now elapsed since my first visit. No views of the kind could seem more chimerical, or could subsist under greater discouragements than mine had done; yet, through the overruling goodness of God, while I seemed abandoned to myself, and blindly following my own headstrong passions, I was guided by a hand that I knew not, to the accomplishment of my wishes. Every obstacle was now removed. I had renounced my former follies, my interest was established, and friends on all sides consenting, the point was now entirely between ourselves; and after what had passed, was easily concluded. Accordingly our hands were joined on the 1st of February, 1750.

The satisfaction I have found in this union, you will suppose, has been greatly heightened by reflection on the former disagreeable contrasts I had passed through, and the views I have had of the singular mercy and providence of the Lord in bringing it to pass. If you please to look back to the beginning of my sixth letter, I doubt not but you will allow, that few persons have known more, either of the misery or happiness of which human life (as considered in itself) is capable. How easily, at a time of life when I was so little capable of judging, (but a few months more than seventeen,) might my affections have been fixed where they could have met with no return, or where success would have been the heaviest disappointment. The long delay I met with was likewise a mercy; for had I succeeded a year or two sooner, before the Lord was pleased to change my heart, we must have been mutually unhappy, even as to the present life. "Surely mercy and goodness have followed me all my days!"

But, alas! I soon began to feel that my heart was still hard and ungrateful to the God of my life. This crowning mercy, which raised me to all I could ask or wish in a temporal view, and which ought to have been an animating motive to obedience and praise, had a contrary effect. I rested in the gift, and forgot the Giver. My poor narrow heart was *satisfied*. A cold and careless frame, as to spiritual things, took place, and gained ground daily. Happily for me the season was advancing, and in June I received orders to repair to Liverpool. This roused me from my dream; I need not tell you that I found the pains of absence and separation fully proportioned to my preceding pleasure. It was hard, very hard, to part, especially as conscience interfered, and suggested to me how little I deserved that we should be spared to meet again. But the Lord supported me. I was a poor, faint, idolatrous creature; but I had now some acquaintance with the way of access to a throne of grace by the blood of Jesus; and peace was soon restored to my conscience. Yet, through all the following voyage, my irregular and excessive affections were as thorns in my eyes, and often made my other blessings tasteless and insipid. But He who doth all things well, over-ruled this likewise for good. It became an occasion of quickening me in prayer both for my wife and myself; it increased my indifference for company and amusement; and it habituated me to a kind of voluntary self-denial, which I was afterwards taught to improve to a better purpose.

While I remained in England, we corresponded every post; and all the while I used the sea afterwards, I constantly kept up the practice of writing, two or three times a-week (if weather and business permitted,) though no conveyance homeward offered for six or eight months together. My packets were usually heavy: and as not one of them at any time miscarried, I have to the amount of nearly 200 sheets



of paper now lying in my bureau of that correspondence. I mention this little relief by which I contrived to soften the intervals of absence, because it had a good effect beyond my first intention. It habituated me to think and write upon a great variety of subjects ; and I acquired, insensibly, a greater readiness of expressing myself than I should otherwise have attained. As I gained more ground in religious knowledge, my letters became more serious ; and, at times, I still find an advantage in looking them over ; especially as they remind me of many providential incidents, and the state of my mind at different periods in these voyages, which would otherwise have escaped my memory.

I sailed from Liverpool in August, 1750, commander of a good ship. I have no very extraordinary events to recount from this period, and shall therefore contract my memoirs, lest I become tedious : yet I am willing to give you a brief sketch of my history down to 1755, the year of my settlement in my present situation. I had now the command and care of thirty persons ; I endeavoured to treat them with humanity, and to set them a good example : I likewise established public worship, according to the liturgy, twice every Lord's-day, officiating myself. Farther than this I did not proceed while I continued in that employment.

Having now much leisure, I prosecuted the study of the Latin with good success. I took a dictionary this voyage, and procured two or three other books ; but still it was my hap to choose the hardest. I added Juvenal to Horace ; and for prose authors, I pitched upon Livy, Cæsar, and Sallust. You will easily conceive, Sir, that I had hard work, to begin (where I should have left off) with Horace and Livy. I was not aware of the difference of style : I had heard Livy highly commended, and was resolved to understand him. I began with the first page, and laid down a rule, which I seldom depart-

ed from, not to proceed to a second period till I understood the first, and so on. I was often at a stand, but seldom discouraged: here and there I found a few lines quite obstinate, and was forced to break in upon my rule, and give them up, especially as my editor had only the text, without any notes to assist me. But there were not many such; for before the close of that voyage, I could (with a few exceptions) read Livy from end to end, almost as readily as an English author. And I found, in surmounting this difficulty, I had surmounted all in one. Other prose authors, when they came in my way, cost me little trouble. In short, in the space of two or three voyages, I became tolerably acquainted with the best classics (I put all I have to say upon this subject together); I read Terence, Virgil, and several pieces of Cicero, and the modern classics, Buchanan, Erasmus, and Cassimir. At length I conceived a design of becoming a Ciceronian myself, and thought it would be a fine thing indeed to write pure and elegant Latin. I made some essays towards it, but by this time the Lord was pleased to draw me nearer to himself, and to give me a fuller view of the "pearl of great price," the inestimable treasure hid in the field of the Holy Scriptures; and, for the sake of this, I was made willing to part with all my newly-acquired riches. I began to think that life was too short (especially my life) to admit of leisure for such elaborate trifling. Neither poet nor historian could tell me a word of Jesus, and I therefore applied myself to those who could. The classics were at first restrained to one morning in the week, and at length quite laid aside. I have not looked into Livy these five years, and I suppose I could not now well understand him. Some passages in Horace and Virgil I still admire; but they seldom come in my way. I prefer Buchanan's Psalms to a whole shelf of Elzevirs. But this much I have gained, and more than

this I am not solicitous about, so much of the Latin as enables me to read any useful or curious book that is published in that language. About the same time, and for the same reason that I quarrelled with Livy, I laid aside the mathematics. I found they not only cost me much time, but ingrossed my thoughts too far; my head was literally full of *schemes*. I was weary of cold contemplative truths, which can neither warm nor amend the heart, but rather tend to aggrandize *self*. I found no traces of this wisdom in the life of Jesus, or the writings of Paul. I do not regret that I have had some opportunities of knowing the first principles of these things; but I see much cause to praise the Lord that he inclined me to stop in time; and, whilst I was "spending my labour for that which is not bread," was pleased to set before me "wine and milk, without money and without price."

My first voyage was fourteen months, through various scenes of danger and difficulty, but nothing very remarkable; and as I intend to be more particular with regard to the second, I shall only say, that I was preserved from every harm; and having seen many fall on my right hand, and on my left, I was brought home in peace, and restored to where my thoughts had been often directed, November 2, 1751.

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## LETTER XII.

I ALMOST wish I could recall my last sheet, and retract my promise. I fear I have engaged too far, and shall prove a mere *Egotist*. "What have I more that can deserve your notice? However, it is some satisfaction that I am now writing to yourself only; and I believe you will have candour to excuse what

nothing but a sense of your kindness could extort from me.

Soon after the period where my last closes, that is, in the interval between my first and second voyage after my marriage, I began to keep a sort of diary; a practice which I have since found of great use. I had in this interval repeated proofs of the ingratitude and evil of my heart. A life of ease, in the midst of my friends, and the full satisfaction of my wishes, was not favourable to the progress of grace, and afforded cause of daily humiliation. Yet, upon the whole, I gained ground. I became acquainted with books which gave me a further view of Christian doctrine and experience; particularly, *Scougal's Life of God in the Soul of Man*, *Hervey's Meditations*, and *the Life of Colonel Gardiner*. As to preaching, I heard none but the common sort, and had hardly an idea of any better; neither had I the advantage of Christian acquaintance. I was likewise greatly hindered by a cowardly reserved spirit; I was afraid of being thought precise: and though I could not live without prayer, I durst not propose it even to my wife, till she herself first put me upon it; so far was I from those expressions of zeal and love, which seem so suitable to the case of one who has had much forgiven. In a few months the returning season called me abroad again, and I sailed from Liverpool, in a new ship, July 1752.

A seafaring life is necessarily excluded from the benefit of public ordinances and Christian communion: but, as I have observed, my loss upon these heads was at this time but small. In other respects, I know not any calling that seems more favourable, or affords greater advantages to an awakened mind, for promoting the life of God in the soul: especially to a person who has the command of a ship, and thereby has it in his power to restrain gross

irregularities in others, and to dispose of his own time; and still more so in African voyages, as these ships carry a double portion of men and officers to most others, which made my department very easy; and, excepting the hurry of trade, &c. upon the coast, which is rather occasional than constant, afforded me abundance of leisure. To be at sea in these circumstances, withdrawn out of the reach of innumerable temptations, with opportunity and turn of mind disposed to observe the wonders of God in the great deep, with the two noblest objects of sight, the expanded *heavens*, and the expanded *ocean*, continually in view; and where evident interpositions of Divine Providence, in answer to prayer, occur almost every day; these are helps to quicken and confirm the life of faith, which, in a good measure, supply to a religious sailor the want of those advantages which can be enjoyed only upon the shore. And, indeed, though my knowledge of spiritual things, as knowledge is usually estimated, was at this time very small; yet I sometimes look back with regret upon these scenes. I never knew sweeter or more frequent hours of divine communion, than in my two last voyages to Guinea, when I was either almost secluded from society on shipboard, or when on shore amongst the natives. I have wandered through the woods, reflecting on the singular goodness of the Lord to ~~me~~ in a place where, perhaps, there was not a person that knew him for some thousand miles round ~~me~~. Many a time, upon these occasions, I have restored the beautiful lines of Propertius to their right owner; lines full of blasphemy and madness when addressed to a creature, but full of comfort and propriety in the mouth of a believer :

*Sic ego desertis possim bene vivere sylvis,  
Quo nulla humano sit via trita pede :  
Tu mihi curarum requies, in nocte vel atra  
Lumen, et in solis tu mihi turba locis.*

## PARAPHRASED.

In desert woods, with thee, my God,  
Where human footsteps never trod,  
How happy could I be ;  
Thou my repose from care, my light,  
Amidst the darkness of the night,  
In solitude my company.

In the course of this voyage I was wonderfully preserved in the midst of many obvious and many unforeseen dangers. At one time there was a conspiracy amongst my own people to turn pirates, and take the ship from me. When the plot was nearly ripe, and they waited only a convenient opportunity, two of those concerned in it were taken ill one day: one of them died, and he was the only person I buried while on board. This suspended the affair, and opened a way to its discovery, or the consequences might have been fatal. The slaves on board were likewise frequently plotting insurrections, and were sometimes upon the very brink of mischief; but it was always disclosed in due time. When I have thought myself most secure, I have been suddenly alarmed with danger; and when I have almost despaired of life, as sudden a deliverance has been vouchsafed me. My stay upon the coast was long, the trade very precarious; and, in pursuit of my business, both on board, and on shore, I was in *deaths often*. Let the following instance serve as a specimen:

I was at a place called *Mana*, near Cape Mount, where I had transacted very large concerns; and had, at the time I am speaking of, some debts and accounts to settle, which required my attendance on shore, and I intended to go as the next morning. When I arose, I left the ship, according to my purpose; but when I came near the shore, the surf, or breach of the sea, ran so high, that I was almost afraid to attempt landing. Indeed I had often ventured at a worse time;

but I felt an inward hinderance and backwardness, which I could not account for : the surf furnished a pretext for indulging it : and after waiting and hesitating for about half an hour, I returned to the ship, without doing my business ; which I think I never did, but that morning, in all the time I used that trade. But I soon perceived the reason of all this : It seems, the day before I intended to land, a scandalous and groundless charge had been laid against me, (by whose instigation I could never learn,) which greatly threatened my honour and interest, both in Africa and England, and would, perhaps, humanly speaking, have affected my life, if I had landed according to my intention. I shall, perhaps, inclose a letter, which will give a full account of this strange adventure ; and therefore shall say no more of it here, any further than to tell you, that an attempt, aimed to destroy either my life or character, and which might very probably, in its consequences, have ruined my voyage, passed off without the least inconvenience. The person most concerned owed me about a hundred pounds, which he sent me in a huff ; and otherwise, perhaps, would not have paid me at all. I was very uneasy for a few hours, but was soon afterwards comforted. I heard no more of my accusation till the next voyage ; and then it was publicly acknowledged to be a malicious calumny, without the least shadow of a ground.

Such were the vicissitudes and difficulties through which the Lord preserved me. Now and then both faith and patience were sharply exercised ; but suitable strength was given ; and as such things did not occur every day, the study of the Latin, of which I gave a general account in my last, was renewed, and carried on from time to time when business would permit. I was mostly very regular in the management of my time ; I allotted eight hours for sleep and meals, eight hours for exercise and devotion, and eight

hours to my books: and thus, by diversifying my engagements, the whole day was agreeably filled up; and I seldom found a day too long, or an hour to spare. My studies kept me employed; and so far it was well; otherwise they were hardly worth the time they cost, as they led me to an admiration of false models and false maxims; an almost unavoidable consequence (I suppose) of an admiration of classic authors. Abating what I have attained of the language, I think I might have read *Cassandra* or *Cleopatra* to as good purpose as I read Livy, whom I now account an equal *romancer*, though in a different way.

From the coast I went to St. Christopher's; and here my idolatrous heart was its own punishment. The letters I expected from Mrs. Newton were by mistake forwarded to Antigua, which had been at first proposed as our port. "As I was certain of her punctuality in writing, if alive, I concluded, by not hearing from her, that she was surely dead. This fear affected me more and more; I lost my appetite and rest; I felt an incessant pain in my stomach; and in about three weeks time, I was near sinking under the weight of an imaginary stroke. I felt some severe symptoms of that mixture of pride and madness which is commonly called a *broken heart*; and indeed I wonder that this case is not more common than it appears to be. How often do the potsherds of the earth presume to contend with their Maker! and what a wonder of mercy is it that they are not all broken! However, my complaint was not all grief; conscience had a share. I thought my unfaithfulness to God had deprived me of her, especially my backwardness in speaking of spiritual things, which I could hardly attempt, even to her. It was this thought, that I had lost invaluable, irrecoverable opportunities, which both duty and affection should have engaged me to improve, that chiefly stung me; and I thought I would have given the world to know that she was living,



that I might at least discharge my engagements by writing, though I was never to see her again. This was a sharp lesson ; but I hope it did me good ; and when I had thus suffered some weeks, I thought of sending a small vessel to Antigua. I did so ; and she brought me several packets ; which restored my health and peace, and gave me a strong contrast of the Lord's goodness to me, and my unbelief and ingratitude towards him.

In August, 1753, I returned to Liverpool. My stay was very short at home that voyage, only six weeks. In that space nothing very memorable occurred ; I shall therefore begin my next with an account of my third and last voyage. And thus I give both you and myself hopes of a speedy period to these memoirs, which begin to be tedious and minute, even to myself ; only I am animated by the thought, that I write at your request ; and have therefore an opportunity of shewing myself Your's, &c.

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### LETTER XIII.

My third voyage was shorter and less perplexed than either of the former. Before I sailed, I met with a young man who had formerly been a midshipman, and my intimate companion on board the Harwich. He was, at the time I first knew him, a sober youth ; but I had found too much success in my unhappy attempts to infect him with libertine principles. When we met at Liverpool, our acquaintance was renewed upon the ground of our former intimacy. He had good sense, and had read many good books. Our conversation frequently turned upon religion ; and I was very desirous to repair the mischief I had done him. I gave him a plain account of the manner and reason of my change, and used every argument to persuade

him to relinquish his infidel schemes; and when I sometimes pressed him so close, that he had no other reply to make, he would remind me, that I was the very first person who had given him an idea of his liberty. This occasioned me many mournful reflections. He was then going master to Guinea himself; but before his ship was ready, his merchant became a bankrupt, which disconcerted his voyage. As he had no farther expectations for that year, I offered to take him with me as a companion, that he might gain a knowledge of the coast; and the gentleman who employed me promised to provide for him upon his return. My view in this was not so much to serve him in his business, as to have an opportunity of debating the point with him at leisure; and I hoped, in the course of my voyage, my arguments, example, and prayers, might have some good effect on him. My intention in this step was better than my judgment; and I had frequent reason to repent it. He was exceedingly profane, and grew worse and worse. I saw in him a most lively picture of what I had once been; but it was very inconvenient to have it always before my eyes. Besides, he was not only deaf to my remonstrances himself, but laboured all he could to counteract my influence upon others. His spirit and passions were likewise exceedingly high; so that it required all my prudence and authority to hold him in any degree of restraint. He was as a sharp thorn in my side for some time; but at length I had an opportunity upon the Coast of buying a small vessel, which I supplied with a cargo from my own, and gave him the command, and sent him away to trade on the ship's account. When we parted, I repeated and enforced my best advice. I believe his friendship and regard were as great as could be expected, when our principles were so diametrically opposite. He seemed greatly affected when I left him; but my words had no weight with him; when he found himself at liberty

from under my eye, he gave a hasty loose to every appetite; and his violent irregularities, joined to the heat of the climate, soon threw him into a malignant fever, which carried him off in a few days. He died convinced, but not changed. The account I had from those who were with him, was dreadful. His rage and despair struck them all with horror; and he pronounced his own fatal doom before he expired, without any appearance that he either *hoped* or *asked* for mercy. I thought this awful contrast might not be improper to give you, as a stronger view of the distinguishing goodness of God to me the chief of sinners.

I left the coast in about four months, and sailed for St. Christopher's. Hitherto I had enjoyed a perfect state of health, equally in every climate, for several years; but upon this passage I was visited with a fever, which gave me a very near prospect of eternity. I have obtained liberty to inclose you three or four letters, which will more clearly illustrate the state and measure of my experience at different times, than any thing I can say at present. One of them, you will find, was written at this period, when I could hardly hold a pen, and had some reason to believe I should write no more. I had not that "full assurance," which is so desirable at a time when flesh and heart fail; but my hopes were greater than my fears; and I felt a silent composure of spirit, which enabled me to wait the event without much anxiety. My trust, though weak in degree, was alone fixed upon the blood and righteousness of Jesus; and those words, "He is able to save to the uttermost," gave me great relief. I was for awhile troubled with a very singular thought; whether it was a temptation, or that the fever disordered my faculties, I cannot say; but I seemed not so much afraid of wrath and punishment, as of being lost and overlooked amidst the myriads that are continually entering the unseen world. What is my soul, thought I, amongst such an innumerable multitude of

beings? and this troubled me greatly. Perhaps the Lord will take no notice of me. I was perplexed thus for some time; but at last a text of Scripture, very apposite to the case, occurred to my mind, and put an end to the doubt. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." In about ten days, beyond the hopes of those about me, I began to amend; and by the time of our arrival in the West-Indies, I was perfectly recovered. I hope this visitation was made useful to me.

Thus far, that is, for about the space of six years, the Lord was pleased to lead me in a secret way. I had learned something of the evil of my heart; I had read the Bible over and over, with several good books, and had a general view of *gospel-truths*; but my conceptions were, in many respects, confused, not having in all this time met with one acquaintance who could assist my inquiries. But upon my arrival at St. Christopher's this voyage, I found a captain of a ship from London, whose conversation was greatly helpful to me. He was and is a member of Mr. Brewer's church, a man of experience in the things of God, and of a lively communicative turn. We discovered each other by some casual expressions in mixed company, and soon became, so far as business would permit, inseparable. For nearly a month we spent every evening together on board each other's ship alternately, and often prolonged our visits till towards day-break. I was all ear; and, what was better, he not only informed my understanding, but his discourse inflamed my heart.—He encouraged me to open my mouth in social prayer; he taught me the advantage of Christian converse; he put me upon an attempt to make my profession more public, and to venture to speak for God. From him, or rather from the Lord by his means, I received an increase of knowledge: my conceptions became clearer and more evangelical; and I was delivered from a fear which had long troubled me—the fear of relapsing into my former apostacy.

But now I began to understand the security of the covenant of grace, and to expect to be preserved, not by my own power and holiness, but by the mighty power and promise of God, through faith in an unchangeable Saviour. He likewise gave me a general view of the state of religion, with the errors and controversies of the times, (things to which I had been entirely a stranger,) and finally directed me where to apply in London for further instruction. With these newly-acquired advantages, I left him; and my passage homewards gave me leisure to digest what I had received. I had much comfort and freedom during those seven weeks, and my sun was seldom clouded. I arrived safely in Liverpool, August, 1754.

My stay at home was intended to be but short; and by the beginning of November I was again ready for the sea: but the Lord saw fit to over-rule my design. During the time I was engaged in the slave-trade, I never had the least scruple as to its lawfulness. I was upon the whole satisfied with it, as the appointment Providence had marked out for me; yet it was, in many respects, far from eligible. It was, indeed, accounted a genteel employment, and usually very profitable, though to me it did not prove so, the Lord seeing that a large increase of wealth would not be good for me. However, I considered myself as a sort of *gaoler* or *turnkey*, and I was sometimes shocked with an employment that was perpetually conversant with chains, bolts, and shackles. In this view I had often petitioned in my prayers, that the Lord in his own time would be pleased to fix me in a more humane calling, and, if it might be, place me where I might have more frequent converse with his people and ordinances, and be freed from those long separations from home which very often were hard to bear. My prayers were now answered, though in a way I little expected. I now experienced another sudden unforeseen change of life. I was within two days of sailing, and to all

appearance in good health as usual ; but in the afternoon, as I was sitting with Mrs. Newton, drinking tea by ourselves, and talking over past events, I was in a moment seized with a fit, which deprived me of sense and motion, and left me no other sign of life than that of breathing. I suppose it was of the apopleptic kind. It lasted about an hour : and when I recovered, it left a pain and dizziness in my head, which continued, with such symptoms as induced the physicians to judge it would not be safe or prudent for me to proceed on the voyage. Accordingly, by the advice of my friend to whom the ship belonged, I resigned the command the day before she sailed ; and thus I was unexpectedly called from that service, and freed from a share of the future consequences of that voyage, which proved extremely calamitous. The person who went in my room, most of the officers, and many of the crew died, and the vessel was brought home with great difficulty.

As I was now disengaged from business, I left Liverpool, and spent most of the following year at London and in Kent. But I entered upon a new trial.— You will easily conceive that Mrs. Newton was not an unconcerned spectator, when I lay extended, and, as she thought, expiring upon the ground. In effect, the blow that struck me reached her in the same instant : she did not indeed immediately feel it, till her apprehensions on my account began to subside ; but as I grew better, she became worse : her surprise threw her into a disorder, which no physicians could define, or medicines remove. Without any of the ordinary symptoms of a consumption, she decayed almost visibly, till she became so weak, that she could hardly bear any one to walk across the room she was in. I was placed for about eleven months in what Dr. Young calls the

—— dreadful post of observation,  
Darker every hour.

It was not till after my settlement at Liverpool, that the Lord was pleased to restore her by his own hand, when all hopes from ordinary means were at an end. But before this took place, I have some other particulars to mention, which must be the subject of the following sheet, which I hope will be the last on this subject from, &c.

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## LETTER XIV.

By the directions I had received from my friend at St. Kitt's, I soon found out a religious acquaintance in London. I first applied to Mr. Brewer, and chiefly attended upon his ministry when in town. From him I received many helps, both in public and private; for he was pleased to favour me with his friendship from the first. His kindness and the intimacy between us, has continued and increased to this day; and of all my many friends, I am most deeply indebted to him. The late Mr. H——d was my second acquaintance, a man of a choice spirit, and an abundant zeal for the Lord's service. I enjoyed his correspondence till near the time of his death. Soon after, upon Mr. Whitefield's return from America, my two good friends introduced me to him; and though I had little personal acquaintance with him till afterwards, his ministry was exceedingly useful to me. I had likewise access to some religious societies, and became known to many excellent Christians in private life. Thus, when at London, I lived at the fountain-head, as it were, for spiritual advantages. When I was in Kent it was very different; yet I found some serious persons there; but the fine variegated woodland country afforded me advantages of another kind. Most of my time, at least some hours every day, I passed in retirement, when the weather was fair; sometimes in the thickest woods,

sometimes on the highest hills, where almost every step varied the prospect. It has been my custom, for many years, to perform my devotional exercises *sub die*, when I have opportunity; and I always find these rural scenes have some tendency both to refresh and to compose my spirits. A beautiful diversified prospect gladdens my heart. When I am withdrawn from the noise and petty works of men, I consider myself as in the great temple which the Lord has built for his own honour.

The country between Rochester and Maidstone, bordering upon the Medway, was well suited to the turn of my mind; and were I to go over it now, I could point to many a place where I remember to have either earnestly sought, or happily found, the Lord's comfortable presence with my soul. And thus I lived, sometimes at London, and sometimes in the country, till the autumn of the following year. All this while I had two trials more or less upon my mind: the first and principal was Mrs. Newton's illness; she still grew worse, and I had daily more reason to fear that the hour of separation was at hand. When faith was in exercise, I was in some measure resigned to the Lord's will; but too often my heart rebelled, and I found it hard either to trust or to submit. I had likewise some care about my future settlement; the African trade was overdone that year, and my friends did not care to fit out another ship till mine returned. I was some time in suspense; but indeed a provision of food and raiment has seldom been a cause of great solicitude to me. I found it easier to trust the Lord in this point than in the former; and accordingly this was first answered. In August I received an account, that I was nominated to the office of tide-surveyor. These places are usually obtained, or at least sought, by dint of much interest and application; but this came to me unsought and unexpected. I knew, indeed, my good friends in Liverpool had endeavoured to procure another



post for me, but found it pre-engaged. I found afterwards, that the place I had missed would have been very unsuitable for me; and that this, which I had no thought of, was the very thing I could have wished for, as it afforded me much leisure, and the liberty of living in my own way. Several circumstances unnoticed by others, concurred to shew me, that the good hand of the Lord was as remarkably concerned in this event, as in any other leading turn of my life.

But when I gained this point, my distress in the other was doubled; I was obliged to leave Mrs. Newton in the greatest extremity of pain and illness, when the physicians could do no more, and I had no ground of hope that I should see her again alive, but this,—that nothing is impossible with the Lord. I had a severe conflict; but faith prevailed: I found the promise remarkably fulfilled, of strength proportioned to my need. The day before I set out, and not till then, the burden was entirely taken from my mind; I was strengthened to resign both her and myself to the Lord's disposal, and departed from her in a cheerful frame. Soon after I was gone she began to amend, and recovered so fast, that in about two months I had the pleasure to meet her at Stone, on her journey to Liverpool.

And now I think I have answered, if not exceeded your desire. Since October 1755, we have been comfortably settled at Liverpool: and all my circumstances have been as remarkably smooth and uniform, as they were various in former years. My trials have been light and few; not but that I still find, in the experience of every day, the necessity of a life of faith. My principal trial is, the body of sin and death, which makes me often to sigh out the apostle's complaint, "O wretched man!" but with him likewise I can say, "I thank God through Jesus Christ my Lord." I live in a barren land, where the knowledge and power of the gospel is very low; yet here are a few of the Lord's

people; and this wilderness has been a useful school to me; where I have studied more leisurely the truths I gathered up in London. I brought down with me a considerable stock of notional truth; but I have since found, that there is no effectual teacher but God; that we can receive no father than he is pleased to communicate; and that no knowledge is truly useful to me but what is made by my own experience. Many things I thought I had learned, would not stand in an hour of temptation, till I had in this way learned them over again. Since the year 1757, I have had an increasing acquaintance in the West-riding of Yorkshire, where the gospel flourishes greatly. This has been a good school to me: I have conversed at large among all parties, without joining any; and in my attempts to hit the *golden mean*, I have sometimes been drawn too near the different extremes; yet the Lord has enabled me to profit by my mistakes. In brief, I am still a learner, and the Lord still condescends to teach me. I begin at length to see that I have attained but very little; but I trust in him to carry on his own work in my soul, and by all the dispensations of his grace and providence, to increase my knowledge of him, and of myself.

When I was fixed in a house, and found my business would afford me much leisure time, I considered in what manner I should improve it. And now, having reason to close with the apostle's determination, "to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified," I devoted my life to the prosecution of spiritual knowledge, and resolved to pursue nothing but in subervience to this main design. This resolution divorced me (as I have already hinted) from the classics and mathematics. My first attempt was to learn so much Greek as would enable me to understand the New Testament and Septuagint. and when I had made some progress this way, I entered upon the Hebrew the following year; and two years afterwards, having surmised some advantages from the Syriac version, I

began with that language. You must not think that I have attained, or ever aimed at, a critical skill in any of these: I had no business with them, but as in reference to something else. I never read one classic author in the Greek; I thought it too late in life to take such a round in this language as I had done in the Latin. I only wanted the signification of scriptural words and phrases: and for this I thought I might avail myself of *Scapula*, the *Synopsis*, and others, who had sustained the drudgery before me. In the Hebrew, I can read the historical books and psalms, with tolerable ease; but in the prophetic and difficult parts, I am frequently obliged to have recourse to *lexicons*, &c. However, I know so much as to be able, with such helps as are at hand, to judge for myself the meaning of any passage I have occasion to consult. Beyond this I do not think of proceeding, if I can find better employment; for I would rather be some way useful to others, than die with the reputation of an eminent linguist.

Together with these studies, I have kept up a course of reading of the best writers in divinity that have come to my hand, in the Latin and English tongues, and some French (for I picked up the French at times while I used the sea). But within these two or three years, I have accustomed myself chiefly to writing, and have not found time to read many books besides the Scriptures.

I am the more particular in this account, as my case has been something singular; for in all my literary attempts, I have been obliged to strike out my own path, by the light I could acquire from books, as I have not had a teacher or assistant since I was ten years of age.

One word concerning my views to the *ministry*, and I have done. I have told you that this was my dear mother's hope concerning me: but her death, and the scenes of life in which I afterwards engaged, seemed

to cut off the probability. The first desires of this sort in my own mind arose many years ago, from a reflection on Gal. i. 23, 24. "But they had heard only, that he which persecuted us in times past, now preached the faith which once he destroyed. And they glorified God in me." I could not but wish for such a public opportunity to testify the riches of divine grace. I thought I was, above most living, a fit person to proclaim that faithful saying, "That Jesus Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners;" and as my life had been full of remarkable turns, and I seemed selected to shew what the Lord could do, I was in some hopes, that perhaps, sooner or later, he might call me into this service.

I believe it was a distant hope of this that determined me to study the original Scriptures; but it remained an imperfect desire in my own breast, till it was recommended to me by some Christian friends. I started at the thought when first seriously proposed to me; but afterwards set apart some weeks to consider the case, to consult my friends, and to intreat the Lord's direction. The judgment of my friends, and many things that occurred, tended to engage me. My first thought was to join the Dissenters, from a presumption that I could not honestly make the required subscriptions: but Mr. C—, in a conversation upon these points, moderated my scruples; and preferring the Established Church in some other respects, I accepted a title from him some months afterwards, and solicited ordination from the late Archbishop of York. I need not tell you I met a refusal, nor what steps I took afterwards to succeed elsewhere. At present (1763) I desist from my applications. My desire to serve the Lord is not weakened; but I am not so hasty to push myself forward as I was formerly. It is sufficient that he knows how to dispose of me, and that he both can and will do what is best. To him I commend

myself: I trust that his will and my true interest are inseparable. To his name be glory for ever. And thus I conclude my story, and presume you will acknowledge I have been particular enough.

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### SUBSEQUENT PARTICULARS.

*We shall now present our readers with a further account of Mr. Newton's life, abridged from the work of the Rev. R. Cecil.*

Mr. Manesty, who had long been a faithful and generous friend of Mr. Newton, procured him the place of tide-surveyor in the port of Liverpool. Mr. N. gives the following account of it:—"I entered upon business yesterday. I find my duty is to attend the tides one week, and visit the ships that arrive, and such as are in the river; and the other week to inspect the vessels in the docks; and thus alternately the year round. The latter is little more than a sinecure, but the former requires pretty constant attendance, both by day and night. I have a good office, with fire and candle, and fifty or sixty people under my direction; with a handsome six-oared boat and a cockswain to row me about in form."—*Letters to a Wife*, vol. II. p. 7.

We cannot wonder that Mr. N. latterly retained a strong impression of a particular providence, superintending and conducting the steps of man; since he was so often reminded of it in his own history. The following occurrence is one of many instances. Mr. N., after his reformation, was remarkable for his punctuality: I remember his often sitting with his watch in his hand, lest he should fail in keeping his next engagement. This exactness with respect to time, it seems, was his habit while occupying his post at Liverpool. One day, however, some business had

so detained him, that he came to his boat much later than usual, to the surprise of those who had observed his former punctuality. He went out in the boat as heretofore to inspect a ship, but the ship blew up just before he reached her; it appears, that if he had left the shore a few minutes sooner, he must have perished with the rest on board.

This anecdote I had from a clergyman, upon whose word I can depend; who had been long on intimate terms with Mr. N., and who had it from Mr. N. himself; the reason of its not appearing in his letters from Liverpool to Mrs. N. I can only suppose to be, his fearing to alarm her with respect to the dangers of his station. But another providential occurrence, which he mentions in those letters, I shall transcribe.

“When I think of my settlement here, and the manner of it, I see the appointment of Providence so good and gracious, and such a plain answer to my poor prayers, that I cannot but wonder and adore. I think I have not yet told you, that my immediate predecessor in office, Mr. C—, had not the least intention of resigning his place on the occasion of his father's death; though such a report was spread about the town without his knowledge, or rather in defiance of all he could say to contradict it. Yet to this false report I owe my situation. For it put Mr. M— upon an application to Mr. S—, the member for the town; and, the very day he received the promise in my favour, Mr. C— was found dead in his bed, though he had been in company, and in perfect health, the night before. If I mistake not, the same messenger, who brought the promise, carried back the news of the vacancy to Mr. S—, at Chester. About an hour after, the mayor applied for a nephew of his; but, though it was only an hour or two, he was too late. Mr. S— had already written, and sent off the letter, and I was appointed accordingly. These circumstances appear

to me extraordinary, though of a piece with many other parts of my singular history. And the more so, as by another mistake I missed the land-waiter's place, which was my first object, and which I now see would not have suited us nearly so well. I thank God I can now look through instruments and second causes, and see his wisdom and goodness immediately concerned in fixing my lot."

Mr. N. having expressed, near the end of his Narrative, the motives which induced him to aim at a regular appointment to the ministry in the Church of England, and of the refusal he met with in his first making the attempt, the reader is farther informed, that, on Dec. 16, 1758, Mr. N. received a title to a curacy from the Rev. Mr. C—, and applied to the Archbishop of York, Dr. Gilbert, for ordination. The Bishop of Chester having countersigned his testimonials, directed him to Dr. Newton, the archbishop's chaplain. He was referred to the secretary, and received the softest refusal imaginable. The secretary informed him, that he had "represented the matter to the archbishop, but his Grace was inflexible in supporting the rules and canons of the Church," &c.

Travelling to Loughborough, Mr. N. stopped at Welwyn, and sending a note to the celebrated Dr. Young, he received for answer, that the doctor would be glad to see him. He found the doctor's conversation agreeable, and to answer his expectation respecting the author of the Night Thoughts. The doctor likewise seemed pleased with Mr. N. He approved Mr. N.'s design of entering the ministry, and said many encouraging things upon the subject; and when he dismissed Mr. N. desired him never to pass near Welwyn, without calling upon him.

Mr. N., it seems, had made some small attempts at Liverpool, in a way of preaching or expounding. Many wished him to engage more at large in those ministerial employments, to which his own mind was inclined. and

he thus expresses his motives in a letter to Mrs. N., in answer to the objections she had formed. "The death of the late Rev. Mr. Jones, of St. Saviour's, has pressed this concern more closely upon my mind. I fear it must be wrong, after having so solemnly devoted myself to the Lord for his service, to wear away my time, and bury my talents in silence (because I have been refused orders in the Established Church), after all the great things he has done for me." \*

In a note annexed, he observes, that "the influence of his judicious and affectionate counsellor moderated the zeal which dictated this letter, written in the year 1762; that had it not been for her, he should probably have been precluded from those important scenes of service, to which he was afterwards appointed:" but he adds, "The exercises of my mind upon this point, I believe, have not been peculiar to myself. I have known several persons, sensible, pious, of competent abilities, and cordially attached to the established church; who, being wearied out with repeated refusals of ordination, and, perhaps, not having the advantage of such an adviser as I had, have at length struck into the itinerant path, or settled among the dissenters. Some of these, yet living, are men of respectable characters, and useful in their ministry.

In the year 1764, Mr. N. had the curacy of Olney proposed to him, and was recommended by Lord Dartmouth to Dr. Green, bishop of Lincoln; of whose candour and tenderness he speaks with much respect. The bishop admitted him as a candidate for orders. "The examination," says he, "lasted about an hour, chiefly upon the principal heads of divinity. As I resolved not to be charged hereafter with dissimulation, I was constrained to differ from his lordship in some points; but he was not offended; he declared himself satisfied, and has promised to ordain me either next

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\* Letters to a Wife, vol. ii. p. 79.



Sunday, in town, or the Sunday following, at Buckden Let us praise the Lord." \*

Mr. N. was ordained deacon at Buckden, April 29, 1764, and priest in June the following year. In the parish of Olney, he found many, who not only had evangelical views of the truth, but had also long walked in the light and experience of it. The vicarage was in the gift of the Earl of Dartmouth, the nobleman to whom Mr. N. addressed the first twenty-six letters in his *Cardiphonia*. The earl was a man of real piety, and most amiable disposition; he had formerly appointed the Rev. Moses Brown vicar of Olney. Mr. Brown was an evangelical minister, and a good man; he had afforded wholesome instruction to the parishioners of Olney, and had been the instrument of a sound conversion in many of them. He was the author of a poem, entitled "Sunday Thoughts;" a translation of Professor Zimmerman's *Excellency of the Knowledge of Jesus Christ*, &c.

But Mr. Brown had a numerous family, and met with considerable trials in it; he too much resembled Eli in his indulgence of his children. He was also under the pressure of difficulties, and had therefore accepted the chaplaincy of Morden College, Blackheath, while vicar of Olney. Mr. N. undertook the curacy of Olney, in which he continued nearly sixteen years, previous to his removal to St. Mary Woolnoth, to which he was afterwards presented, by the late John Thornton, Esq.

Mr. N. was under the greatest obligations to Mr. Thornton's friendship while at Olney, and was enabled to extend his own usefulness by the bounty of that extraordinary man. To this common patron of every useful and pious endeavour, Mr. N. had sent his *Narrative*, and Mr. Thornton replied in his usual manner, that is, by accompanying his

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\* Letters to a Wife, vol. ii. p. 80.

letter with a valuable bank note; and, some months after, he paid Mr. N. a visit at Olney. A closer connection being now formed between friends, who employed their distinct talents in promoting the same benevolent cause, Mr. Thornton left a sum of money with Mr. N., to be appropriated to the defraying his necessary expenses, and relieving the poor. "Be hospitable," said Mr. Thornton, "and keep an open house for such as are worthy of entertainment: help the poor and needy: I will steadily allow you £200 a year, and readily send whatever you have occasion to draw for more." Mr. N. told me, that he thought he had received of Mr. Thornton upwards of £3000 in this way, during the time he resided at Olney.

The case of most ministers is peculiar in this respect; some among them may be looked up to, on account of their publicity and talents; they may have made great sacrifices of their personal interest, in order to enter on their ministry, and may be possessed of the strongest benevolence; but from the narrowness of their pecuniary circumstances, and from the largeness of their families, they often perceive, that an ordinary tradesman in their parishes can subscribe to a charitable or popular institution much more liberally than themselves. This would have been Mr. N.'s case, but for the above-mentioned singular patronage.

A minister, however, should not be so forgetful of his dispensation, as to repine at his want of power in this respect. He might as justly estimate his deficiency by the strength of a lion, or the flight of the eagle. The power communicated to him is of another kind; and power of every kind belongs to God, who gives gifts to every man severally as he will. The two mites of the widow were all the power of that kind which was communicated to her, and her bestowment of her two mites was better accepted than the large offerings of the rich man. The powers, therefore, of Mr. Thornton, and of Mr. N., though

of a different order, were both consecrated to God; and each might have said, "Of thine own have we given thee."

Providence seems to have appointed Mr. N.'s residence at Olney, among other reasons, for the relief of the depressed mind of the poet Cowper.

Of great importance also was the vicinity of Mr. N.'s residence to the Rev. Thomas Scott, then curate of Ravenstone and Western Underwood, a man whose ministry and writings have since been so useful to mankind.

In the year 1776, Mr. N. was afflicted with a tumour, or wen, which had formed on his thigh; and, on account of its growing more large and troublesome, he resolved to undergo the experiment of extirpation. This obliged him to go to London for the operation, which was successfully performed, October 10th, by the late Mr. Warner, of Guy's Hospital. I remember hearing him speak several years afterwards of this trying occasion; but the trial did not seem to have affected him as a painful operation, so much as a critical opportunity in which he might fail in demonstrating the patience of a Christian under pain. "I felt," said he, "that being enabled to bear a very sharp operation, with tolerable calmness and confidence, was a greater favour granted to me than the deliverance from my malady."\*

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\* His reflections upon the occasion, in his diary, are as follow:—"Thou didst support me, and make this operation very tolerable. The cure, by thy blessing, was happily expedited; so that, on Sunday the 27th, I was enabled to go to church and hear Mr. F—, and the following Sunday, to preach for him. The tenderness and attention of Dr. and Mrs. F—, with whom we were, I cannot sufficiently describe; nor, indeed, the kindness of many other friends. To them I would be thankful, my Lord, but especially to thee; for what are creatures but instruments in thy hand, fulfilling thy pleasure? At home all was preserved quiet, and I met

While Mr. N. thus continued faithfully discharging the duties of his station, and watching for the temporal and eternal welfare of his flock, a dreadful fire broke out at Olney, October 1777. Mr. N. took an active part in comforting and relieving the sufferers: he collected upwards of £200 for them; a considerable sum of money, when the poverty, and late calamity of the place are regarded. Such instances of benevolence towards the people, with the constant assistance he afforded the poor, by the help of Mr. Thornton, naturally led him to expect, that he should have so much influence as to restrain gross licentiousness on particular occasions. But to use his own expression, he had "lived to bury the old crop, on which any dependance could be placed." He preached a weekly lecture, which occurred that year on the 5th of November; and, as he feared that the usual way of celebrating it at Olney might endanger his hearers in their attendance at the church, he exerted himself to preserve some degree of quiet on that evening. Instead, however, of hearkening to his intreaties, the looser sort exceeded their former extravagance, drunkenness, and rioting, and even obliged him to send out money, to preserve his house from violence. This happened but a year before he finally left Olney. When he related this occurrence to me, he added, that he believed he should never have left the place, while he lived, had not so incorrigible a spirit prevailed in a parish he had long laboured to reform.

But I must remark here, that this is no solitary fact, nor at all unaccountable. The Gospel, we are informed,

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with no incident to distress or disturb me while absent. The last fortnight I preached often, and was hurried about in seeing my friends. But though I had little leisure or opportunity for retirement, and my heart, alas! as usual, was sadly reluctant and dull in secret, yet in public thou wert pleased to favour me with liberty."

is not merely "a savour of life unto life," but also "of death unto death." Those whom it does not soften it is often found to harden. Thus we find St. Paul "went into the synagogue and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. But, when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them."

"The strong man armed" seeks to keep his house "and goods in peace," and, if a minister is disposed to let this sleep of death remain, that minister's own house and goods may be permitted to remain in peace also. Such a minister may be esteemed by his parish as a good kind of man—quiet, inoffensive, candid, &c. ; and if he discovers any zeal, it is directed to keep the parish in the state he found it ; that is, in ignorance and unbelief, worldly-minded, and hard-hearted ; the very state of peace in which the strong man armed seeks to keep his palace or citadel, the human heart.

But if a minister, like the subject of these Memoirs, enters into the design of his commission—if he be alive to the interest of his own soul, and that of the souls committed to his charge ; or, as the apostle expresses it, "to save himself, and those that hear him," he may depend upon meeting in his own experience the truth of that declaration, "Yea, all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" in one form of it or another. One of the most melancholy sights we behold, is when any part of the church, through prejudice, joins the world in throwing the stone. There is, however, such a determined enmity to godliness itself, in the breast of a certain class of men existing in most parishes, that, whatever learning and good sense is found in their teacher—whatever consistency of character, or blameless deportment he exhibits ; whatever benevolence or bounty (like that which Mr. N.

exercised at Olney) may constantly appear in his character; such men remain irreconcilable. They will resist every attempt made to appease their enmity. God alone, who changed the hearts of Paul and Newton, can heal these bitter waters.

I recollect to have heard Mr. N. say on such an occasion, "When God is about to perform any great work, he generally permits some great opposition to it. Suppose Pharaoh had acquiesced in the departure of the children of Israel, or that they had met with no difficulties in the way, they would, indeed, have passed from Egypt to Canaan with ease; but they, as well as the church in all future ages, would have been great losers. The wonder-working God would not have been seen in those extremities, which make his arm so visible. A smooth passage here would have made but a poor story."

But, under such disorders, Mr. N., in no one instance that I ever heard of, was tempted to depart from the line marked out by the precept and example of his Master. He continued to "bless them that persecuted him," knowing that "the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient." To the last day he spent among them he went straight forward, "in meekness instructing those that opposed, if God peradventure might give them repentance to the acknowledging the truth."

But, before we take a final leave of Olney, the reader must be informed of another part of Mr. N.'s labours. He had published a volume of Sermons before he took orders, dated Liverpool, January 1, 1760. In 1762 he published his Omicron, to which his letters, signed Vigil, were afterwards annexed. In 1764 appeared his Narrative. In 1767 a volume of Sermons, preached at Olney. In 1769 his Review of Ecclesiastical History; and, in 1770, a volume of Hymns, of which some were composed by Mr. Cowper, and distinguished

by a C. prefixed to them. To these succeeded, in 1781, his valuable work, *Cardiphonia*.

From Olney Mr. N. was removed to the rectory of the united parishes of St. Mary Woolnoth and St. Mary Woolchurch Haw, Lombard Street, on the presentation of his friend Mr. Thornton.

Some difficulty arose on Mr. N.'s being presented, from Mr. Thornton's right of presentation being claimed by a nobleman; the question was, therefore, at length brought before the House of Lords, and determined in favour of Mr. Thornton. Mr. N. preached his first sermon in these parishes, December 19, 1779, from Eph. iv. 15, "Speaking the truth in love." It contained an affectionate address to his parishioners, and was directly published for their use.

Here a new and very distinct scene of action and usefulness was set before him. Placed in the centre of London, in an opulent neighbourhood, with connections daily increasing, he had now a course of service to pursue, in several respects different from his former at Olney. Being, however, well acquainted with the word of God, and the heart of man, he proposed to himself no new weapons of warfare, for pulling down the strong holds of sin and Satan around him. He perceived, indeed, most of his parishioners too intent upon their wealth and merchandize to pay much regard to their new minister; but, since they would not come to him, he was determined to go, as far as he could, to them; and, therefore, soon after his institution, he sent a printed address to his parishioners: he afterwards sent them another address, on the usual prejudices that are taken up against the gospel. What effects these attempts had then upon them does not appear; certain it is, that these, and other acts of his ministry, will be recollected by them, when the objects of their present pursuits are forgotten or lamented.

I have heard Mr. N. speak with great feeling on the

circumstances of his last important station. "That one," said he, "of the most ignorant, the most miserable, and the most abandoned of slaves, should be plucked from his forlorn state of exile on the coast of Africa, and at length be appointed minister of the parish of the first magistrate of the first city in the world; that he should there not only testify of such grace, but stand up as a singular instance and monument of it; that he should be enabled to record it in his history, preaching, and writings, to the world at large—is a fact I can contemplate with admiration, but never sufficiently estimate." This reflection, indeed, was so present to his mind on all occasions, and in all places, that he seldom passed a single day anywhere, but he was found referring to the strange event, in one way or other.

When Mr. N. came to London, he resided for some time in Charles' Square, Hoxton; afterwards he removed to Coleman Street Buildings, where he continued till his death. Being of the most friendly and communicative disposition, his house was open to Christians of all ranks and denominations. Here, like a father among his children, he used to entertain, encourage, and instruct his friends, especially younger ministers, or candidates for the ministry. Here also the poor, the afflicted, and the tempted, found an asylum and a sympathy, which they could scarcely find, in an equal degree, any where besides.

His timely hints were often given with much point, and profitable address, to the numerous acquaintance who surrounded him in his public station. Some time after Mr. N. had published his *Omicron*, and described the three stages of growth in religion, from the blade, the ear, and the full corn in the ear, distinguishing them by the letters A, B, and C, a conceited young minister wrote to Mr. N., telling him, that he read his own character accurately drawn in that of C. Mr. N. wrote in reply, that in drawing the character



of C, or full maturity, he had forgotten to add, till now, one prominent feature of C.'s character, namely, that C never knew his own face.

"It grieves me," said Mr. N., "to see so few of my wealthy parishioners come to church. I always consider the rich as under greater obligations to the preaching of the gospel than the poor. For at church, the rich must hear the whole truth as well as others. There they have no mode of escape. But let them once get home, you will be troubled to get at them; and, when you are admitted, you are so fettered with punctilio, so interrupted and damped with the frivolous conversation of their friends, that, as Archbishop Leighton says, 'it is well if your visit does not prove a blank or a blot.'"

Mr. N. used to improve every occurrence which he could with propriety bring into the pulpit. One night he found a bill put up at St. Mary Woolnoth's, upon which he commented a great deal when he came to preach. The bill was to this effect: "A young man, having come to the possession of a very considerable fortune, desires the prayers of the congregation, that he may be preserved from the snares to which it exposes him." "Now, if the man," said Mr. N., "had lost a fortune, the world would not have wondered to have seen him put up a bill, but this man has been better taught."

Coming out of his church, on a Wednesday, a lady stepped him on the steps, and said, "The ticket, of which I held a quarter, is drawn a prize of ten thousand pounds. I know you will congratulate me upon the occasion." "Madam," said he, "as for a friend under temptation, I will endeavour to pray for you."

Soon after he came to St. Mary's, I remember to have heard him say, in a certain company, "Some have observed, that I preach shorter sermons on a Sunday morning, and with more caution; but this I do upon principle. I suppose I may have two or three

of my bankers present, and some others of my parish, who have hitherto been strangers to my views of truth. I endeavour to imitate the apostle. 'I became,' says he, 'all things to all men,' but observe the end, it was in order to 'gain some.' The fowler must go cautiously to meet shy birds, but he will not leave his powder and shot behind him. 'I have fed you with milk,' says the apostle; but there are some, that are not only for forcing strong meat, but bones too, down the throat of the child. We must have patience with a single step in the case of an infant; and there are one-step books and sermons, which are good in their place. Christ taught his disciples as they were able to bear; and it was upon the same principle that the apostle accommodated himself to prejudice. Now," continued he, "What I wish to remark on these considerations is, that this apostolical principle, steadily pursued, will render a minister apparently inconsistent; superficial hearers will think him a trimmer. On the other hand, a minister, destitute of the apostolical principle and intention, and directing his whole force to preserve the appearance of consistency, may thus seem to preserve it; but, let me tell you, here is only the form of faithfulness, without the spirit."

I could not help observing one day, how much Mr. N. was grieved with the mistake of a minister, who appeared to pay too much attention to politics. "For my part," said he, "I have no temptation to turn politician, and much less to inflame a party, in these times. When a ship is leaky, and a mutinous spirit divides the company on board, a wise man would say, 'My good friends, while we are debating the water is gaining on us—we had better leave the debate, and go to the pumps.' I endeavour," continued he, "to turn my people's eyes from instruments to God. I am continually attempting to show them, how far they are from knowing either the matter of fact, or the matter of right. I inculcate our great privileges in this country,

and advise a discontented man to take a lodging for a little while in Russia or Prussia."

Though no great variety of anecdote is to be expected in a course so stationary as this part of Mr. N.'s life and ministry, for sometimes the course of a single day might give the account of a whole year; yet that day was so benevolently spent, that he was found in it "not only rejoicing with those that rejoiced," but literally "weeping with those that wept." The portrait, which Goldsmith drew from imagination, Mr. N. realized in fact, insomuch that had Mr. N. sat for his picture to the poet, it could not have been more accurately delineated than by the following lines in his *Deserted Village* :—

"Unskilful he to fawn, or seek for power,  
By doctrines fashion'd to the varying hour;  
Far other aims his heart had learn'd to prize,  
More bent to raise the wretched than to rise.  
Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,  
And e'en his failings lean'd to virtue's side;  
But in his duty prompt at every call,  
He watch'd and wept, he pray'd and felt, for all:  
And as a bird each fond endearment tries,  
To tempt his new-fledg'd offspring to the skies,  
He tried each art, reprov'd each dull delay,  
Allur'd to brighter worlds, and led the way."

I remember to have heard him say, when speaking of his continual interruptions, "I see in this world two heaps, of human happiness and misery; now if I can take but the smallest bit from one heap and add to the other, I carry a point. If, as I go home, a child has dropped a halfpenny, and if, by giving it to another, I can wipe away its tears, I feel I have done something. I should be glad indeed to do greater things, but I will not neglect this. When I hear a knock at my study door, I hear a message from God; it may be a lesson of instruction, perhaps a lesson of patience; but, since it is his message, it must be interesting."

But it was not merely under his own roof that his benevolent aims were thus exerted; he was found ready to take an active part in relieving the miserable, directing the anxious, or recovering the wanderer, in whatever state or place he discovered such: of which take the following instance:—

The late D<sup>r</sup>. Buchanan was a youth of considerable talents, and who had received a respectable education. I am not informed of his original destination in point of profession; but certain it is, that he left his parents in Scotland, with a design of viewing the world at large, and that, without those pecuniary resources which could render such an undertaking convenient, or even practicable. Yet having the sanguine expectations of youth, together with its inexperience, he determinately pursued his plan. I have seen an account from his own hand, of the strange, but by no means dishonourable, resources to which he was reduced in the pursuit of this scheme; nor can romance exceed the detail.\* To London, however, he came; and then he seemed to come to himself. He had heard Mr. N.'s character, and on a Sunday evening he went to St. Mary Woolnoth, and stood in one of the aisles while Mr. N. preached. In the course of that week he wrote to Mr. N. some account of his adventures, and state of mind. Such circumstances could be addressed to no man more properly. Mr. N.'s favourite maxim was often in his mouth, more often in his actions, and always in his heart:—

*Haud ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco.*

“Not ignorant of suffering, I hasten to succour the wretched.”

Mr. N. therefore gave notice from the pulpit on the

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\* The particulars are related in the life of the late Rev. Dr. Buchanan, published since his decease, by the Rev. H. Pearson.—ED.

following Sunday evening, that, if the person were present who had sent him such a letter, he should be glad to speak with him.

Mr. Buchanan gladly accepted the invitation, and came to Mr. N.'s house, where a friendship began, which continued till Mr. N.'s death. Mr. N. not only afforded this youth the instruction, which he, at this period, so deeply needed; but, marking his fine abilities and correct inclination, he introduced him to Henry Thornton, Esq.; who, inheriting his father's unbounded liberality, and determined adherence to the cause of real religion, readily patronised the stranger. Mr. Buchanan was, by the munificence of this gentleman, supported through a university education, and was afterwards ordained to a curacy. It was, however, thought expedient that his talents should be employed in an important station abroad, which he readily undertook, and in which he maintained a very distinguished character.

It ought not to be concealed, that Mr. Buchanan, after his advancement, not only returned his patron the whole expense of his university education, but also placed in his hands an equal sum, for the education of some pious youth, who might be deemed worthy of the same assistance as was once afforded to himself.

Mr. N. used to spend a month or two, annually, at the house of some friend in the country; he always took an affectionate leave of his congregation before he departed, and spoke of his leaving town as quite uncertain of returning to it, considering the variety of incidents which might prevent that return. Nothing was more remarkable than his constant habit of regarding the hand of God in every event, however trivial it might appear to others. On every occasion—in the concerns of every hour—in matters public or private, like Enoch, he “walked with God.” Take a single instance of his state of mind in this respect. In walking to his church he would say, “The way of

man is not in himself,' nor can he conceive what belongs to a single step—when I go to St. Mary Woolnoth, it seems the same whether I turn down Lothbury or go through the Old Jewry; but the going through one street and not another, may produce an effect of lasting consequences. A man cut down my hammock in sport, but had he cut it down half an hour later, I had not been here; as the exchange of crew was then making. A man made a smoke on the sea-shore at the time a ship passed, which was thereby brought-to, and afterwards brought me to England."

Mr. N. experienced a severe stroke soon after he came to St. Mary's, and while he resided in Charles' Square, in the death of his niece, Miss Eliza Cunningham. He loved her with the affection of a parent, and she was, indeed, truly lovely. He had brought her up, and had observed that, with the most amiable natural qualities, she possessed real piety. With every possible attention from Mr. and Mrs. Newton and their friends, they yet saw her gradually sink into the arms of death; but fully prepared to meet him as a messenger sent from her heavenly Father; to whom she departed, October 6th, 1785, aged fourteen years and eight months. On this occasion Mr. N. published some brief memoirs of her character and death.\*

In the years 1783 and 1784 Mr. N. preached a course of sermons, on an occasion of which he gives the following account in his first discourse: "Conversation in almost every company, for some time past, has much turned upon the commemoration of Handel, and particularly on his oratorio of the Messiah. I mean to lead your meditations to the language of the oratorio, and to consider, in their order (if the Lord, on whom our breath depends, shall be pleased to afford life, ability, and opportunity), the several sublime and interesting passages of Scripture, which are the basis

of that admired composition." In the year 1780 he published these d'scourses, in two volumes, octavo. There is a passage so original, at the beginning of his fourth sermon, from *Mal.* iii. 1—3, "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come, to his temple," &c., that I shall transcribe it for the use of such as have not seen these discourses; at the same time it will, in a few words, convey Mr. N.'s idea of the usual performance of this oratorio, or attending its performance, in present circumstances.

"Whereunto shall we liken the people of this generation, and to what are they like?" I represent to myself a number of persons, of various characters, involved in one common charge of high treason. They are already in a state of confinement, but not yet brought to their trial. The facts, however, are so plain, and the evidence against them so strong and pointed, that there is not the least doubt of their guilt being fully proved, and that nothing but a pardon can preserve them from punishment. In this situation, it should seem their wisdom to avail themselves of every expedient in their power for obtaining mercy. But they are entirely regardless of their danger, and wholly taken up with contriving methods of amusing themselves, that they may pass away the term of their imprisonment with as much cheerfulness as possible. Among other resources, they call in the assistance of music. And amidst a great variety of subjects in this way, they are particularly pleased with one. They choose to make the solemnities of their impending trial, the character of their Judge, the methods of his procedure, and the awful sentence to which they are exposed, the ground-work of a musical entertainment. And, as if they were quite unconcerned in the event, their attention is chiefly fixed upon the skill of the composer, in adapting the style of his music to the very solemn language and subject with which they are trifling. The king, however, out of his great clemency

and compassion towards those who have no pity for themselves, prevents them with his goodness. Undesired by them, he sends them a gracious message. He assures them, that he is unwilling they should suffer: he requires, yea, he entreats them to submit. He points out a way in which their confession and submission shall be certainly accepted; and in this way, which he condescends to prescribe, he offers them a free and a full pardon. But instead of taking a single step towards a compliance with his goodness, they set his message likewise to music: and this, together with a description of their previous state, and of the fearful doom awaiting them, if they continue obstinate, is sung for their diversion, accompanied with the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of instruments. Surely, if such a case as I have supposed could be found in real life, though I might admire the musical taste of these people, I should commiserate their insensibility!"

But "clouds return after the rain:" a greater loss than that of Miss Cunningham was to follow. Enough has been said in these Memoirs already to show the more than ordinary affection Mr. N. felt for her who had been so long his idol, as he used to call her; of which I shall add but one more instance, out of many that might easily be collected.

Being with him at the house of a lady at Blackheath, we stood at a window, which had a prospect of Shooter's Hill. "Ah," said Mr. N., "I remember the many journies I took from London to stand at the top of that hill, in order to look towards the part in which Mrs. N. then lived: not that I could see the spot itself, after travelling several miles, for she lived far beyond what I could see, when on the hill; but it gratified me even to look towards the spot: and this I did always once, and sometimes twice a week." "Why," said I, "this is more like



one of the vagaries of romance than of real life." "True," replied he, "but real life has extravagancies, that would not be admitted to appear in a well-written romance—they would be said to be out of nature."

In such a continued habit of excessive attachment, it is evident how keenly Mr. N. must have felt, while he observed the progress of a threatening disorder. This will be manifest from the following account which he published. It was added to his publication, *Letters to a Wife*, and he entitles it

*A Relation of some Particulars respecting the Cause, Progress, and Close, of the last Illness of my late dear Wife.*

Among my readers, there will doubtless be some of a gentle, sympathising spirit, with whom I am not personally acquainted; and perhaps their feelings may so far interest them in my concerns, as to make them not unwilling to read a brief account of my late great trial.

My dear wife had naturally a good constitution, and was favoured with good spirits to the last. But the violent shock she sustained, in the year 1754, when I was suddenly attacked by a fit, (I know not of what kind,) which left me for about an hour no sign of life but breathing, made as sudden a change in her habit, and subjected her, from that time, to a variety of chronic complaints. She was several times confined, for five or six months, to her chamber, and often brought so low, that her recovery was deemed hopeless. I believe she spent ten years, out of the forty that she was spared to me, (if all the days of her sufferings were added together,) in illness and pain. But she had likewise long intervals of health. The fit I have mentioned (the only one I ever had) was the mean the Lord was pleased to appoint, in answer to my prayers, to free me from the irksome sea-faring life, in which I was till then engaged, and to appoint me a settlement on shore.

Before our removal from Liverpool, she received a blow upon her left breast, which occasioned her some pain and anxiety, for a little time, but which soon wore off. A small lump remained in the part affected, but I heard no more of it for many years. I believe that, latterly, she felt more than I was aware of; but her tenderness for me made her conceal it as long as possible. I have often since wondered at her success, and how I could be kept so long ignorant of it.

In the month of October, 1788, she applied, unknown to me, to a friend of mine, an eminent surgeon. Her design was, if he approved it, to submit to an operation, and so to adjust time and circumstances with him, that it might be performed in my absence, and before I could know it. But the surgeon told her that the malady was too far advanced, and the tumour (the size of which he compared to the half of a melon) was too large to warrant the hope of being extracted, without the most imminent danger of her life, and that he durst not attempt it. He could give her but little advice, more than to keep herself as quiet, and her mind as easy as possible; and little more encouragement, than by saying that, the pains to which she was exposed, were generally rendered tolerable by the use of laudanum; to which, however, she had a dislike, little short of an antipathy.

I cannot easily describe the composure and resignation with which she gave me this recital, the next day after her interview with the surgeon; nor of the sensations of my mind while I heard it. My conscience told me, that I had well deserved to be wounded where I was most sensible; and that it was my duty to submit with silence to the will of the Lord. But I strongly felt that, unless he was pleased to give me this submission, I was more likely to toss like a wild bull in a net, in defiance of my better judgment.

Soon after the Lord was pleased to visit our dear adopted daughter with a dreadful fever, which at first

greatly affected her nerves, and afterwards became putrid. She (Miss Catlett) was brought very near to the grave indeed; for we, once or twice, thought her actually dead. But He, who in the midst of judgment remembers mercy, restored her, and still preserves her, to be the chief temporal comfort of my old age, and to afford me the greatest alleviation of the loss I was soon to experience, that the case could admit.

The attention and anxiety occasioned by this heavy dispensation, which lasted during the whole of a very severe winter, were by no means suited to promote that tranquillity of mind which my good friend wished my dear wife would endeavour to preserve. She was often much fatigued, and often much alarmed. Next to each other, this dear child had the nearest place, both in her heart and mine. The effects were soon apparent: as the spring of 1789 advanced, her malady rapidly increased; her pains were almost incessant, and often intense, and she could seldom lie one hour in her bed in the same position. Oh! my heart, what didst thou then suffer!

But in April, the God who heareth prayer, mercifully afforded relief, and gave such a blessing to the means employed, that her pains ceased. And though I believe she never had an hour of perfect ease, she felt little of the distressing pains incident to her malady, from that time to the end of her life, (which was about twenty months) excepting at three or four short intervals, which, taken together, hardly amounted to two hours: and these returns of anguish, I thought, were permitted, to shew me how much I was indebted to the goodness of God for exempting her feelings, and my sympathy, from what would have been terrible indeed!

In the close of the summer she was able to go to Southampton, and returned tolerably well. She was twice at church, in the first week, after she came home. She then went no more abroad, except in a

coach, for a little air and exercise : but she was cheerful, tolerably easy, slept as well as most people who are in perfect health, and could receive and converse with her kind friends who visited her.

It was not long after, that she began to have a distaste for food, which continued and increased ; so that, perhaps, her death was, at last, rather owing to weakness, from want of nourishment, than to her primary disorder. Her dislike was, first, to butcher's meat, of which she could bear neither the sight nor the smell. Poultry and fish, in their turns, became equally distasteful. She retained some relish for small birds, awhile after she had given up the rest ; but it was at a season when they were difficult to be obtained. I hope I shall always feel my obligations to the kind friends, who spared no pains to procure some for her, when they were not to be had in the markets. At that time I set more value upon a dozen of larks than upon the finest ox in Smithfield. But her appetite failed to these also, when they became more plentiful.

Under this trying discipline I learnt, more sensibly than ever, to pity those whose sufferings, of a similar kind, are aggravated by poverty. Our distress was not small, yet we had every thing within reach, that could, in any degree, conduce to her refreshment or relief ; and we had faithful and affectionate servants, who were always willingly engaged to their power, yea, as the apostle speaks, beyond their power, in attending and assisting her, by night and by day. What must be the feelings of those who, when afflicted with grievous diseases, pine away, unpitied, unnoticed, without help, and, in a great measure, destitute of common necessities ? This reflection, among others, contributed to quiet my mind, and to convince me that I had still much more cause for thankfulness than for complaint.

For about a twelvemonth of her confinement her

spirits were good, her patience was exemplary, and there was a cheerfulness in her looks and her language that was wonderful. Often the liveliness of her remarks has forced a smile from us, when the tears were in our eyes. Whatever little contrivances she formed for her amusement, in the 'course of the day, she would attend to nothing till she had finished her stated reading of the Scripture; in which she employed much time and great attention. I have her Bible by me, (which I would not part with for half the manuscripts in the Vatican) in which almost every principal text, from the beginning to the end of the book, is marked in the margin with a pencil, by her own dear hand. The good word of God was her medicine and her food, while she was able to read it. She read Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns, and the Olney Hymns, in the same manner. There are few of them, in which one, two, or more verses, are not thus marked; and in many, which I suppose she read more frequently, every verse is marked.

But in October, the enemy was permitted, for a while, to take advantage of her bodily weakness, to disturb the peace and serenity of her mind. Her thoughts became clouded and confused; and she gradually lost, not only the comfortable evidence of her own interest in the precious truths of the Bible, but she lost all hold of the truth itself. She doubted the truth of the Bible, or whether truth existed; and, together with this, she expressed an extreme reluctance to death, and could not easily bear the most distant hint of her approaching end, though we were expecting it daily and hourly. This was the *acme*, the high-water-mark of my trial: this was hard to bear indeed.

My readers, perhaps, will scarcely believe, that I derived some consolation, during this gloomy period, from perceiving that her attachment to me was very sensibly abated. She spoke to me with an indifference, of which, a little before, she was incapable. If,

when the Lord's presence was withdrawn, and she could derive no comfort from his word, she had found some relief from my being with her, or from hearing me speak, I should have been more grieved. Her affection to me, confirmed by so many proofs, in the course of forty years, was not to be impeached by this temporary suspension of its exercise. I judged the same, of the frame of her mind, as to her spiritual concerns: I ascribed them both to the same causes—her bodily weakness, and the power of temptation. She was relieved, in both respects, after about a fortnight spent in conflict and dismay. The Lord restored peace to her soul, and then her former tenderness to me immediately revived. Then, likewise, she could calmly speak of her approaching dissolution. She mentioned some particulars concerning her funeral, and our domestic concerns, with great composure. But her mind was not so fully restored to its former tone, as to give her freedom to enlarge upon her hopes and views, as I had wished, till near her dissolution; and then she was too low to speak at all.

One addition to our trial yet remained. It had been her custom, when she went from her sofa to her bed, to exert herself, for my encouragement, to shew me how well she could walk. But it pleased the Lord that, by some alteration, which affected her spine, she was disabled from moving herself; and other circumstances rendered it extremely difficult to move her. It has taken five of us nearly two hours, to remove her from one side of the bed to the other, and, at times, even this was impracticable: so that she has lain more than a week, exactly in the same spot, without the possibility of changing her position. All this was necessary on my account. The rod had a voice, and it was the voice of the Lord. I understood the meaning no less plainly, than if he had spoken audibly from heaven, and said, "Now contemplate your idol! Now see what *she* is, whom you once presumed to prefer to

*Me!*" Even this bitter cup was sweetened by the patience and resignation which he gave her. When I have said, "You suffer greatly," her answer usually was, "I suffer, indeed, but not greatly." And she often expressed her thankfulness that, though her body was immovable, she was still permitted the use of her hands.

One of the last sensible concerns she felt, respecting *this* world, was when my honoured friend, patron, and benefactor, the late John Thornton, Esq. of Clapham, was removed to a *better*. She revered and regarded him, I believe, more than she did any person upon earth: and she had reason. Few had nearer access, to know and admire his character; and perhaps none were under greater, if equal, obligations to him than we. She knew of his illness, but was always afraid to enquire after the event; nor should I have ventured to inform her, but that the occasion requiring me to leave her for four or five hours, when I hardly expected to find her alive at my return, I was constrained to give her the reason of my absence. She eagerly replied, "Go by all means; I would not have you stay with me upon any consideration." I put the funeral ring I was favoured with into her hands; she put it first to her lips, and then to her eyes, bedewing it with her tears. I trust they soon met again. But she survived him more than a month.

Her head became so affected, that I could do little more than sit and look at her. Our intercourse by words was nearly broken off. She could not easily bear the sound of the gentlest foot upon the carpet, nor of the softest voice. On Sunday, the 12th of December, when I was preparing for church in the morning, she sent for me, and we took a final farewell, as to this world. She faintly uttered an endearing appellation, which was familiar to her, and gave me her hand, which I held, while I prayed by her bedside. We exchanged a few tears; but I was almost

as unable to speak as she was. But I returned soon after, and said, "If your mind, as I trust, is in a state of peace, it will be a comfort to me if you can signify it by holding up your hand." She held it up, and waved it to and fro several times.

That evening, her speech, her sight, and, I believe, her hearing, wholly failed. She continued perfectly composed, without taking notice of any thing, or discovering any sign of pain or uneasiness, till Wednesday evening, towards seven o'clock. She then began to breathe very hard: her breathing might be called groaning, for it was heard in every part of the house; but I believe it was entirely owing to the difficulty of expiration, for she lay quite still, with a placid countenance, as if in a gentle slumber. There was no start or struggle, nor a feature ruffled. I took my post by her bed-side, and watched her nearly three hours, with a candle in my hand, till I saw her breathe her last, on the 15th of December, 1790, a little before ten in the evening.

When I was sure she was gone, I took off her ring, according to her repeated injunction, and put it upon my own finger. I then kneeled down with the servants who were in the room, and returned the Lord my unfeigned thanks for her deliverance, and her peaceful dismission.

How wonderful must be the moment after death! What a transition did she then experience! She was instantly freed from sin, and all its attendant sorrows, and I trust, instantly admitted to join the heavenly choir. That moment was remarkable to me likewise. It removed from me the chief object, which made another day, or hour of life, as to my own personal concern, desirable. At the same time, it set me free from a weight of painful feelings and anxieties, under which, nothing short of a divine power could have so long supported me.

I believe it was about two or three months before her



death, when I was walking up and down the room, offering disjointed prayers, from a heart torn with distress, that a thought suddenly struck me, with unusual force, to this effect: The promises of God must be true; surely the Lord will help me, *if I am willing to be helped!* It occurred to me, that we are often led, from a vain complacency in what we call our sensibility, to indulge that unprofitable grief, which both our duty and our peace require us to resist, to the utmost of our power. I instantly said aloud, "Lord, I am helpless indeed in myself, but I hope I am willing, without reserve, that thou shouldst help me."

It had been much upon my mind, from the beginning of this trial, that I was a minister, and that the eyes of many were upon me; that my turn of preaching had very much led me to endeavour to comfort the afflicted, by representing the gospel as a catholicon, affording an effectual remedy for every evil, a full compensation for every want or loss, to those who truly receive it; so that though a believer may be afflicted, he cannot be properly unhappy, unless he gives way to self-will and unbelief. I had often told my hearers, that a state of trial, if rightly improved, was, to the christian, a post of honour, affording the fairest opportunity of exemplifying the power of divine grace, to the praise and glory of the Giver. It had been, therefore, my frequent daily prayer, that I might not by impatience, or despondency, be deprived of the advantage my situation afforded me, of confirming, by my own practice, the doctrine which I had preached to others; and that I might not give them occasion to apply to me the words of Eliphaz to Job, chap. iv. 4, 5, "Thy words have uphelden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees; but now it is come unto thee, and thou faintest; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled!" And I had not prayed in vain. But from the time that I so remarkably felt myself *willing to be helped*, I might truly say to the

praise of the Lord, My heart trusted in Him, and I was helped indeed. Through the whole of my painful trial I attended all my stated and occasional services, as usual; and a stranger would scarcely have discovered, either by my words or looks, that I was in trouble. Many of our intimate friends were apprehensive that this long affliction, and especially the closing event, would have overwhelmed me; but it was far otherwise. It did not prevent me from preaching a single sermon, and I preached on the day of her death.

After she was gone, my willingness to be helped, and my desire that the Lord's goodness to me might be observed by others, for their encouragement, made me indifferent to some laws of established custom, the breach of which is often more noticed than the violation of God's commands. I was afraid of sitting at home, and indulging myself, by poring over my loss; and therefore I was seen in the street, and visited some of my serious friends the very next day. I likewise preached three times while she lay dead in the house. Some of my brethren kindly offered their assistance; but as the Lord was pleased to give me strength, both of body and mind, I thought it my duty to stand up in my place, as formerly. And after she was deposited in the vault, I preached her funeral sermon,\* with little more sensible emotion than if it had been for another person. I have reason to hope that many of my hearers were comforted and animated, under their afflictions, by what they saw of the Lord's goodness to me, in my time of need. And I acknowledge that it was well worth standing a while in the fire, for such an opportunity of experiencing and exhibiting the power and faithfulness of his promises.

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\* From a text which I had reserved from my first entrance on the ministry, for this particular service, if I should survive her, and be able to speak.

I was not supported by lively sensible consolations, but by being enabled to realize to my mind some great and leading truths of the word of God. I saw, what indeed I knew before, but never till then so strongly and clearly perceived, that, as a sinner, I had no *right*, and as a believer, I could have no *reason*, to complain. I considered her as a loan, which He who lent her to me had a right to resume whenever He pleased; and that as I had deserved to forfeit her every day, from the first, it became me rather to be thankful that she was spared so long to me, than to resign her with reluctance when called for. Farther, that his sovereignty was connected with infinite wisdom and goodness, and that, consequently, if it were possible for me to alter any part of his plan, I could only spoil it; that such a short-sighted creature as I, so blind to the possible consequences of my own wishes, was not only unworthy, but unable, to choose well for himself; and that it was therefore my great mercy and privilege, that the Lord condescended to choose for me. May such considerations powerfully affect the hearts of my readers under their troubles, and then I shall not regret having submitted to the view of the public a detail, which may seem more proper for the subject of a private letter to a friend. They who can feel, will, I hope, excuse me. And it is chiefly for their sakes that I have written it.

When my wife died, the world seemed to die with her (I hope, to revive no more). I see little now but my ministry and my christian profession, to make a continuance in life, for a single day, desirable; though I am willing to wait my appointed time. If the world cannot restore *her* to me (not that I have the remotest wish that her return was possible) it can do nothing for me. The Bank of England is too poor to compensate for such a loss as mine. But the Lord, the all-sufficient God, speaks, and it is done. Let those who know him, and trust him, be of good

courage. He can give them strength according to their day; He can increase their strength, as their trials are increased, to any assignable degree. And what He *can* do, He has promised He *will* do. The power and faithfulness, on which the successive changes of day and night, and of the seasons of the year, depend, and which uphold the stars in their orbits, are equally engaged to support his people, and to lead them safely and unhurt, (if their path be so appointed,) through floods and flames. Though I believe she has never yet been (and probably never will be) out of my waking thoughts, for five minutes at a time; though I sleep in the bed in which she suffered and languished so long, I have not had one uncomfortable day, nor one restless night, since she left me. I have lost a right hand, which I cannot but miss continually, but the Lord enables me to go on, cheerfully, without it.

May his blessing rest upon the reader! May glory, honour, and praise, be ascribed to his great and holy name, now and for ever! Amen.

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The following verses were composed by Mr. Newton, and sung after her funeral sermon.

HABAK. iii. 17, 18.

THE earth with rich abundance stor'd,  
To answer all our wants,  
Invites our hearts to praise the Lord,  
For what his bounty grants.

Flocks, herds, and corn, and grateful fruit,  
His gracious hand supplies;  
And while our various tastes they suit,  
Their prospect cheers our eyes.

To these, He adds each tender tie  
Of sweet domestic life;  
Endearing joys, the names imply,  
Of parent, husband, wife.

But sin has poison'd all below,  
 Our blessings, burdens prove ;  
 On ev'ry hand we suffer woe,  
 But most, where most we love.

Nor vintage, harvest, flocks, nor herds,  
 Can fill the heart's desire ;  
 And oft a worm destroys our gourds, ,  
 And all our hopes expire.

Domestic joys, alas ! how rare !  
 Possess'd, and known by few !  
 And they who know them find they are  
 As frail, and transient too.

But you, who love the Saviour's voice,  
 And rest upon his name ;  
 Amidst these changes may rejoice,  
 For He is still the same.

The Lord himself will soon appear,  
 Whom you, unseen, adore ;  
 Then He will wipe off ev'ry tear,  
 And you shall weep no more.

Mr. N. made this remark on her death, "Just before Mrs. N.'s disease became so formidable, I was preaching on the waters of Egypt being turned into blood. The Egyptians had idolized their river, and God made them loath it. I was apprehensive it would soon be a similar case with me." During the very affecting season of Mrs. N.'s dissolution, Mr. N., like David, wept and prayed ; but the desire of his eyes being taken away by the stroke, he too, like David, "arose from the earth, and came into the temple of the Lord, and worshipped," and that in a manner which surprised some of his friends.

Besides which, Mr. N. had a favourite sentiment, which I have heard him express in different ways, long before he had so special an occasion for illustrating it in practice. "God in his providence," he used to say, "is continually bringing about occasions to demonstrate characters." He used to instance

the case of Achan and Judas among bad men; and that of St. Paul, Acts xxvii. among good ones. "If any one," said he, "had asked the centurion, who Paul the prisoner was, that sailed with them on board the ship—it is probable he would have thus replied, 'He is a troublesome enthusiast, who has lately joined himself to a certain sect. These people affirm, that a Jewish malefactor, who was crucified some years ago at Jerusalem, rose the third day from the dead; and this Paul is mad enough to assert, that Jesus, the leader of their sect, is not only now alive, but that he himself has seen him, and is resolved to live and die with him.—Poor crazy creature!' But God made use of this occasion to discover the real character of Paul, and taught the centurion, from the circumstances which followed, to whom it was he owed his direction in the storm, and for whose sake he received his preservation through it."

In all trying occasions, therefore, Mr. N. was particularly impressed with the idea of a christian, and especially of a christian minister, being called to stand forward as an example to his flock—to feel himself placed in a post of honour—a post, in which he may not only glorify God, but also forcibly demonstrate the peculiar supports of the gospel. More especially, when this could be done (as in his own case) from no doubtful motive; then it may be expedient to leave the path of ordinary custom, for the greater reason of exhibiting both the doctrines of truth, and the experience of their power.

Though I professedly publish none of Mr. N.'s letters, yet I shall take the liberty to insert part of one, with which I am favoured by J. Forbes, Esq. of Stanmore Hill, written to him while at Rome, and dated December 5th, 1796. It shows the interest which the writer took in the safety of his friend, and his address in attempting to break the enchantments with which men

of taste are surrounded, when standing in the centre of the fine arts.

“The true christian, in strict propriety of speech, has no home here; he is, and must be, a stranger and a pilgrim upon earth; his citizenship, treasure, and real home are in a better world; and every step he takes, whether to the east, or to the west, is a step nearer to his Father’s house. On the other hand, when in the path of duty, he is always at home; for the whole earth is the Lord’s: and as we see the same sun in England or Italy, in Europe or Asia, so wherever he is, he equally sets the Lord always before him; and finds himself equally near the throne of grace at all times, and in all places. God is everywhere, and, by faith in the Great Mediator, he dwells in God, and God in him.

“I trust, my dear sir, that you will carry out and bring home with you, a determination similar to that of the patriarch Jacob; who vowed a vow, saying, ‘If God will be with me, and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God.’ May the Lord himself write it on your heart!

“You are now at Rome, the centre of the fine arts; a place abounding with every thing to gratify a person of your taste. Athens had the pre-eminence in the apostle Paul’s time; and I think it highly probable, from many passages in his writings, that he likewise had a taste capable of admiring and relishing the beauties of painting, sculpture, and architecture, which he could not but observe during his abode in that city: but then he had a higher, a spiritual, a divine taste, which was greatly shocked and grieved by the ignorance, idolatry, and wickedness, which surrounded him, insomuch, that he could attend to nothing else. This taste, which cannot be acquired

by any effort or study of ours, but is freely bestowed on all who sincerely ask it of the Lord, divests the vanities, which the world admire, of their glare; and enables us to judge of the most splendid and specious works of men, who know not God, according to the declaration of the prophet, 'They hatch cockatrice eggs, and weave the spider's web.' Much ingenuity is displayed in the weaving of a cobweb, but when finished it is worthless and useless; incubation requires close diligence and attention; if the hen is too long from her nest, the egg is spoiled; but why should she sit at all upon the egg, and watch it, and warm it night and day, if it only produces a cockatrice at last? Thus vanity and mischief are the chief rulers of unsanctified genius; the artists spin webs, and the philosophers, by their learned speculations, hatch cockatrices, to poison themselves and their fellow-creatures: few of either sort have one serious thought of that awful eternity, upon the brink of which they stand for a while, and into the depth of which they successively fall.

"A part of the sentence denounced against the city, which once stood upon seven hills, is so pointed and graphical, that I must transcribe it: 'And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee, and the light of a candle shall no more be seen in thee. Now, I am informed, that, upon certain occasions, the whole cupola of St. Peter's is covered with lamps, and affords a very magnificent spectacle: if I saw it, it would remind me of that time when there will not be the shining of a single candle in the city; for the sentence must be executed, and the hour may be approaching.

"You kindly inquire after my health: myself and family are through the Divine favour perfectly well; yet, healthy as I am, I labour under a growing



disorder, for which there is no cure; I mean old age. I am not sorry it is a mortal disease, from which no one recovers; for who would live always in such a world as this, who has a scriptural hope of an inheritance in the world of light? I am now in my seventy-second year, and seem to have lived long enough for myself; I have known something of the evil of life, and have had a large share of the good. I know what the world can do, and what it cannot do; it can neither give nor take away that peace of God, which passeth all understanding; it cannot sooth a wounded conscience, nor enable us to meet death with comfort. That you, my dear sir, may have an abiding and abounding experience that the gospel is a catholicon, adapted to all our wants and all our feelings, and a suitable help when every other help fails, is the sincere and ardent prayer of

“Your affectionate friend,

“JOHN NEWTON.”

But in proportion as Mr. N. felt the vanity of earthly pursuits, he was as feelingly alive to whatever regarded eternal concerns. Take an instance of this, in a visit which he paid another friend. This friend was a minister who affected great accuracy in his discourses, and who, on that Sunday, had nearly occupied an hour in insisting on several laboured and nice distinctions made in his subject. As he had a high estimation of Mr. N.'s judgment, he inquired of him, as they walked home, whether he thought the distinctions just now insisted on were full and judicious? Mr. N. said he thought them not full, as a very important one had been omitted. “What can that be?” said the minister, “for I had taken more than ordinary care to enumerate them fully.” “I think not,” replied Mr. N., “for when many of your congregation had travelled several miles for a meal, I think you should not have forgotten the important distinction which must ever exist between meat and bones.”

In the year 1790, Mr. N. had the honorary degree of D.D. conferred upon him by the university of New Jersey in America, and the diploma sent him. He also received a work in two volumes, dedicated to him with the above title annexed to his name. Mr. N. wrote the author a grateful acknowledgment for the work, but begged to decline an honour which he never intended to accept. "I am," said he, "as one born out of due time \* I have neither the pretension nor wish to honours of this kind. However, therefore, the university may over-rate my attainments, and thus show their respect, I must not forget myself; it would be both vain and improper were I to concur in it."

But Mr. N. had yet another storm to weather. While we were contemplating the long and rough voyage he had passed, and thought he had only now to rest in a quiet haven, and with a fine sunset at the close of the evening of his life; clouds began to gather again, and seemed to threaten a wreck at the very entry of the port.

He used to make excursions in the summer to different friends in the country, endeavouring to make

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\* In a MS. note on a letter dated 15th Dec. 1797, he writes, "Though I am not so sensibly affected as I could wish, I hope I am truly affected by the frequent reviews I make of my past life. Perhaps the annals of thy church scarcely afford an instance in all respects so singular. Perhaps thy grace may have recovered some from an equal degree of apostacy, infidelity, and profligacy; but few of them have been redeemed from such a state of misery and depression as I was in, upon the coast of Africa, when thy unsought mercy wrought for my deliverance: but that such a wretch should not only be spared, and pardoned, but reserved to the honour of preaching thy gospel, which he had blasphemed and renounced, and at length be placed in a very public situation, and favoured with acceptance and usefulness, both from the pulpit and the press, so that my poor name is known in most parts of the world, where there are any who know thee—this is wonderful indeed! The more thou hast exalted me the more I ought to abase myself."

these visits profitable to them and their neighbours, by his continual prayers, and the expositions he gave of the scriptures read at their morning and evening worship. I have heard of some who were first brought to the knowledge of themselves and of God by attending his exhortations on these occasions; for, indeed, besides what he undertook in a more stated way at the church, he seldom entered a room, but something both profitable and entertaining fell from his lips. After the death of Miss Cunningham and Mrs. N., his companion in these summer excursions was his other niece, Miss Elizabeth Catlett. This young lady had also been brought up by Mr. and Mrs. N. with Miss Cunningham, and on the death of the two latter, she became the object of Mr. N.'s naturally affectionate disposition. She also became quite necessary to him by her administrations in his latter years; she watched him, walked with him, visited wherever he went; when his sight failed, she read to him, divided his food, and was unto him all that a dutiful daughter could be.

But in the year 1801, a nervous disorder seized her, by which Mr. N. was obliged to submit to her being separated from him. During the twelvemonth it lasted, the weight of the affliction, added to his weight of years seemed to overwhelm him. I extracted a few of his reflections on the occasion, written on some blank leaves in an edition of his Letters to a Wife, which he lent me on my undertaking these Memoirs, and subjoin them in a note.\* It may give the reader

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\* "August 1st, 1801. I now enter my 77th year. I have been exercised this year with a trying and unexpected change; but it is by thy appointment, my gracious Lord; and thou art unchangeably wise, good, and merciful. Thou gavest me my dear adopted child. Thou didst own my endeavours to bring her up for thee. I have no doubt that thou hast called her by thy grace. I thank thee for the many years' comfort (ten) I have had in her, and for the attention and affection she has always shown me, exceeding that of most daughters to their

pleasure to be informed, that Miss Catlett returned home, and gradually recovered.\*

It was with a mixture of delight and surprise, that the friends and hearers of this eminent servant of God beheld him bringing forth such a measure of fruit in extreme age. Though then almost eighty years old, his sight nearly gone, and incapable, through deafness, of joining in conversation, yet his public ministry was regularly continued, and maintained with a considerable degree of his former animation. His memory, indeed, was observed to fail, but his judgment in divine things, still remained; and though some depression of spirits was observed, which he used to account for from his advanced age, his perception, taste, and zeal for the truths he had long received and taught, were evident. Like Simeon, having seen the salvation of the Lord, he now only waited and prayed to depart in peace.

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own parents. Thou hast now tried me, as thou didst Abraham, in my old age; when my eyes are failing, and my strength declines. Thou hast called for my Isaac, who had so long been my chief stay and staff, but it was thy chief blessing that made her so. A nervous disorder has seized her, and I desire to leave her under thy care; and chiefly pray for myself, that I may be enabled to wait thy time and will, without betraying any signs of impatience or despondency unbecoming my profession and character. Hitherto thou hast helped me; and to thee I look for help in future. Let all issue in thy glory, that my friends and hearers may be encouraged by seeing how I am supported: let thy strength be manifest in my weakness, and thy grace be sufficient for me, and let all finally work together for our good, Amen. I aim to say from my heart, Not my will, but thine be done. But though thou hast in a measure made my spirit willing, thou knowest, and I feel, that the flesh is weak. Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief. Lord, I submit: subdue every rebellious thought that dares arise against thy will. Spare my eyes, if it please thee; but, above all, strengthen my faith and love."

\* Mr. Newton's Letters to a Niece, were written to her: they are published by the Religious Tract Society.

After Mr. N. was turned of eighty, some of his friends feared he might continue his public ministrations too long; they marked, not only his infirmities in the pulpit, but felt much on account of the decrease of his strength, and of his occasional depressions. Conversing with him in January 1806 on the latter, he observed, that he had experienced nothing which in the least affected the principles he had felt and taught; that his depressions were the natural result of fourscore years, and that, at any age, we can only enjoy that comfort from our principles which God is pleased to send. "But," replied I, "in the article of public preaching, might it not be best to consider your work as done, and stop before you evidently discover you can speak no longer?" "I cannot stop," said he, raising his voice, "What, shall the old African blasphemer stop while he can speak?"

In every future visit I perceived old age making rapid strides. At length his friends found some difficulty in making themselves known to him: his sight, his hearing, and his recollection exceedingly failed; but, being mercifully kept from pain, he generally appeared easy and cheerful. Whatever he uttered was perfectly consistent with the principles he had so long and so honourably maintained. Calling to see him a few days before he died, with one of his most intimate friends, we could not make him recollect either of us; but seeing him afterwards, when sitting up in his chair, I found so much intellect remaining as produced a short and affectionate reply, though he was utterly incapable of conversation.

Mr. N. declined in this very gradual way, till at length it was painful to ask him a question, or attempt to rouse faculties almost gone; still his friends were anxious to get a word from him, and those friends who survive him will be as anxious to learn the state of his mind in his latest hours. It is quite natural thus to inquire, though it is not important how such a decided

character left this world. I have heard Mr. N. say, when he has heard particular enquiry made about the last expressions of an eminent believer, "Tell me not how the man died, but how he lived."

Still I say it is natural to inquire, and I will meet the desire (not by trying to expand uninteresting particulars, but) as far as I can collect encouraging facts; and I learn from a paper, kindly sent me by his family, all that is interesting and authentic.

About a month before Mr. N.'s death, Mr. Smith's niece was sitting by him, to whom he said, "It is a great thing to die; and when flesh and heart fail, to have God for the strength of our heart, and our portion for ever: I know whom I have believed, and he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day."

When Mrs. Smith (his niece, formerly Miss Catlett) came into the room, he said, "I have been meditating on a subject, 'Come, and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.'"

At another time he said, "More light, more love, more liberty—Hereafter I hope, when I shut my eyes on the things of time, I shall open them in a better world. What a thing it is to live under the shadow of the wings of the Almighty! I am going the way of all flesh." And when one replied, "The Lord is gracious," he answered, "If it were not so, how could I dare to stand before him?"

The Wednesday before he died, Mrs. G— asked him if his mind was comfortable; he replied, "I am satisfied with the Lord's will."

Mr. N. seemed sensible to his last hour, but expressed nothing remarkable after these words. He departed on the 21st, and was buried in the vault of his church the 31st of December, 1807, having left

the following injunction, in a letter, for the direction of his executors.

“ I propose writing an epitaph for myself, if it may be put up, on a plain marble tablet, near the vestry-door, to the following purport :—

JOHN NEWTON, CLERK,  
Once an Infidel and Libertine,  
A servant of slaves in Africa,  
Was, by the rich mercy of our Lord and Saviour,  
JESUS CHRIST,  
Preserved, restored, pardoned,  
And appointed to preach the Faith  
He had long laboured to destroy,  
Near sixteen years at Olney in Bucks,  
And .. years in this church.  
On Feb. 1, 1750, he married  
MARY,  
Daughter of the late George Catlett,  
Of Chatham, Kent.  
He resigned her to the Lord who gave her,  
On the 15th of December, 1790.

“ And I earnestly desire, that no other monument, and no inscription but to this purport, may be attempted for me.”

The following is a copy of the beginning of Mr. Newton's will, dated June 13, 1803 :—

“ In the name of God, Amen. I JOHN NEWTON, of Coleman Street Buildings, in the parish of St. Stephen, Coleman Street, in the City of London, Clerk, being through mercy in good health and of sound and disposing mind, memory, and understanding, although in the seventy-eighth year of my age, do, for the settling of my temporal concerns, and for the disposal of all the worldly estate which it hath pleased the Lord in his good providence to give me, make this my last Will and Testament as follows. I commit my soul to my gracious God and Saviour, who mercifully spared and preserved me, when I was an apostate, a

blasphemer, and an infidel, and delivered me from that state of misery on the coast of Africa into which my obstinate wickedness had plunged me; and who has been pleased to admit me (though most unworthy) to preach his glorious gospel. I rely with humble confidence upon the atonement and mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ, God and man, which I have often proposed to others as the only foundation whereon a sinner can build his hope, trusting that he will guard and guide me through the uncertain remainder of my life, and that he will then admit me into his presence in his heavenly kingdom. I would have my body deposited in the vault under the parish church of Saint Mary Woolnoth, close to the coffins of my late dear wife and my dear niece, Elizabeth Cunningham; and it is my desire, that my funeral may be performed with as little expense as possible, consistent with decency."

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*Remarks made by Mr. Newton in Familiar Conversation.*

While the mariner uses the loadstone, the philosopher may attempt to investigate the cause; but after all, in steering through the ocean, he can make no other use of it than the mariner.

If an angel were sent to find the most perfect man, he would probably not find him composing a body of divinity, but perhaps a cripple in a poor-house, whom the parish wish dead, and humbled before God with far lower thoughts of himself than others think of him.

When a christian goes into the world, because he sees it is his *call*, yet, while he feels it also his *cross*, it will not hurt him.

Satan will seldom come to a christian with a gross temptation: a green log and a candle may be safely left together; but bring a few shavings, then some



small sticks, and then larger, and you may soon bring the green log to ashes.

If two angels were sent from heaven to execute a divine command, one to conduct an empire, and the other to sweep a street in it, they would feel no inclination to change employment.

What some call providential openings are often powerful temptations; the heart, in wandering, cries, Here is a way opened before me: but, perhaps, not to be *trod*den but *re*jected.

I should have thought mowers very idle people; but they work while they whet their scythes. Now devotedness to God, whether it mows or whets the scythe, still goes on with the work.

A christian should never plead spirituality for being a sloven; if he be but a shoe-cleaner, he should be the best in the parish.

My principal method of defeating heresy, is by establishing truth. One proposes to fill a bushel with *tares*; now if I can fill it first with *wheat*, I shall defy his attempts.

When *some* people talk of religion, they mean they have heard so many sermons, and performed so many devotions, and thus mistake the *means* for the *end*. But true religion is an habitual recollection of God and intention to serve him, and this turns every thing into gold. We are apt to suppose that we need something splendid to evince our devotion, but true devotion equals things—washing plates, and cleaning shoes, is a high office, if performed in a right spirit. If three angels were sent to earth, they would feel perfect indifference who should perform the part of prime-minister, parish minister, or watchman.

Many have puzzled themselves about the origin of evil; I observe there *is* evil, and that there is a way to escape it, and with this I begin and end.

Consecrated things under the law were first sprinkled with blood, and then anointed with oil, and

thenceforward were no more common. Thus under the gospel, every christian has been a common vessel for profane purposes; but when sprinkled and anointed, he becomes separated and consecrated to God.

I would not give a straw for that assurance, which sin will not damp. If David had come from his adultery, and had talked of his assurance at that time, I should have despised his speech.

A spirit of adoption is the spirit of a child; he may disoblige his father, yet he is not afraid of being turned out of doors. The *union* is not dissolved, though the *communion* is. He is not well with his father, therefore must be unhappy, as their interests are inseparable.

We often seek to apply cordials when the patient is not prepared for them, and it is the patient's advantage, that he cannot take a medicine when prematurely offered. When a man comes to me, and says, "I am quite happy." I am not sorry to find him come again with some fears. I never saw a work stand well without a check. "I only want," says one, "to be sure of being safe, and then I will go on." No; perhaps, then you will go *off*.

For an old christian to say to a young one, "Stand in my evidence," is like a man, who has with difficulty climbed by a ladder or scaffolding to the top of the house, and cries to one at the bottom, "This is the place for a prospect—come up at a step."

A christian in the world is like a man, who has had a long intimacy with one, whom at length he finds out to have been the murderer of a kind father; the intimacy, after this, will surely be broken.

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." A man may live in a deep mine in Hungary, never having seen the light of the sun; he may have received accounts of prospects, and by the help of a candle may have examined a few engravings

of them; but let him be brought out of the mine, and set on the mountain, what a difference appears!

Candour will always allow much for inexperience. I have been thirty years forming my own views, and in the course of this time some of my hills have been sinking, and some of my valleys have risen; but how unreasonable would it be to expect all this should take place in another person, and that in the course of a year or two.

Candour forbids us to estimate a character from its accidental blots. Yet it is thus that David, and others, have been treated.

There is the analogy of faith; it is a master-key, which not only opens particular doors, but carries you through the whole house; but an attachment to a rigid system is dangerous. Luther once turned out the epistle of St. James, because it disturbed his system. I shall preach, perhaps, very usefully upon two opposite texts, while kept apart; but if I attempt nicely to reconcile them, it is ten to one if I don't begin to bungle.

I can conceive a living man without an arm or a leg, but not without a head or a heart: so there are some truths essential to vital religion, and which all awakened souls are taught.

Apostacy, in all its branches, takes its rise from atheism. "I have set the Lord always before me," &c.

We are surprised at the fall of a famous professor, but, in the sight of God, he was gone before; it is only *we* that have now first discovered it. "He that despiseth small things, shall fall by little and little."

There are critical times of danger. After great services, honours, and consolations, we should stand upon our guard. Noah, Lot, David, Solomon, fell in these circumstances. Satan is a footpad: a footpad will not attack a man in going to the bank, but in returning with his pocket full of money.

A christian is like a young nobleman, who, on going

to receive his estate, is at first enchanted with his prospects; this in a course of time may wear off, but a sense of the value of the estate grows daily.

When we first enter into the divine life, we propose to grow *rich*; God's plan is to make us feel *poor*.

Good men have need to take heed of building upon groundless impressions. Mr. Whitfield had a son, who, as he imagined, was born to be a very extraordinary man: but the son soon died, and the father was cured of his mistake.

I remember, in going to undertake the care of a congregation, I was reading, as I walked in a green lane, "Fear not, Paul, I have much people in this city." But I soon afterwards was disappointed in finding that Paul was not John, and that Corinth was not Warwick.

Christ has taken our nature into heaven to represent *us*; and has left us on earth, with his nature to represent *him*.

Wordly men will be true to their principles; and if we were as true to ours, the visits between the two parties would be short and seldom.

A christian in the world is like a man transacting his affairs in the rain. He will not suddenly leave his client, because it rains; but the moment the business is done, he is off: as it is said in the Acts, "Being let go, they went to their own company."

God's word is certainly a restraint; but it is such a restraint as the irons, which prevent children from getting into the fire.

God deals with us as we do with our children: he first *speaks*, then gives a gentle *stroke*, at last a *blow*.

The religion of a sinner stands on two pillars; namely, what Christ did for us in his flesh, and what he performs in us by his Spirit. Most errors arise from an attempt to separate these two.

Man is not taught any thing to purpose till God becomes his teacher, and then the glare of the world is

put out, and the value of the soul rises in full view. A man's present sentiments may not be accurate, but we make too much of sentiments. We pass a field with a few blades, we call it a field of wheat; but here is no wheat; no, not in perfection, but wheat is sown, and full ears may be expected.

The word temperance, in the New Testament, signifies *self-possession*; it is a disposition suitable to one who has a race to run, and therefore will not load his pockets with lead.

One reason why we must not attempt to pull up the tares which grow among the wheat is, that we have not skill for the work; like a weeder, whom Mrs. N. employed in my garden at Olney, who for weeds pulled up some of Mrs. N.'s favourite flowers.

Contrivers of systems on the earth are like contrivers of systems in the heavens; where the sun and moon keep the same course, in spite of the philosophers.

A man always in society, is one always on the spend: on the other hand, a mere solitary is at his best but a candle in an empty room.

If we were upon the watch for improvement, the common news of the day would furnish it: the falling of the tower in Siloam, and the slaughter of the Galileans, were the news of the day, which our Lord improved.

The generality make out their righteousness by comparing themselves with some others whom they think worse: thus, a woman of the town, who was in the Lock Hospital, was offended at a minister speaking to her as a sinner, because she had never picked a pocket.

Take away a toy from a child, and give him another, and he is satisfied; but if he be hungry, no toy will do. Thus, as new-born babes, true believers desire the sincere milk of the word; and the desire of grace, in this way, is grace.

One said, that the great saints in the calendar were many of them poor sinners; Mr. N. replied, they were

poor saints indeed, if they did not feel that they were great sinners.

The Lord has reasons, far beyond our ken, for opening a wide door, while he stops the mouth of a useful preacher. John Bunyan would not have done half the good he did, if he had remained preaching in Bedford, instead of being shut up in Bedford prison.

Don't tell me of your feelings. A traveller would be glad of fine weather, but, if he be a man of business, he will go on. Bunyan says, You must not judge of a man's haste by his horse, for when the horse can hardly move, you may see by the rider's urging him, what a hurry he is in.

Professors, who own the doctrines of free grace, often act inconsistently with their own principles, when they are angry at the defects of others. A company of travellers fall into a pit, one of them gets a passenger to draw him out: now he should not be angry with the rest for falling in, nor because they are not yet out, as he is. He did not pull himself out: instead, therefore, of reproaching them, he should show them pity; he should avoid, at any rate, going down upon their ground again, and show how much better and happier he is upon his own. We should take care that we do not make our profession of religion a receipt in full for all other obligations. A man, truly illuminated, will no more despise others, than Bartimeus, after his own eyes were opened, would take a stick, and beat every blind man he met.

It is pure mercy that negatives a particular request. A miser would pray very earnestly for gold, if he believed prayer would gain it; whereas, if Christ had any favour to him, he would take his gold away. A child walks in the garden in spring, and sees cherries; he knows they are good fruit, and therefore asks for them. "No, my dear," says the father, "they are not yet ripe: stay till the season."

If I cannot take pleasure in infirmities, I can

sometimes feel the profit of them. I can conceive a king to pardon a rebel, and take him into his family, and then say, "I appoint you for a season to wear a fetter. At a certain season I will send a messenger to knock it off. In the mean time this fetter will serve to remind you of your state; it may humble you, and restrain you from rambling."

I have read of many wicked popes, but the worst pope I ever met with is Pope SELF.

The heir of a great estate, while a child, thinks more of a few shillings in his pocket, than of his inheritance. So a christian is often more elated by some frame of heart, than by his title to glory.

I feel like a man, who has no money in his pocket, but is allowed to draw for all he wants upon one infinitely rich: I am, therefore, at once both a beggar and a rich man.

I went one day to Mrs. G—'s, just after she had lost all her fortune: I could not be surprised to find her in tears, but she said, "I suppose you think I am crying or my loss, but that is not the case; I am now weeping to think I should feel so much uneasiness on this account." After that, I never heard her speak again upon the subject as long as she lived.

Sometimes I compare the troubles which we have to undergo in the course of the year to a great bundle of fagots, far too large for us to lift. But God does not require us to carry the whole at once; he mercifully unties the bundle, and gives us first one stick, which we are to carry to-day, and then another which we are to carry to-morrow, and so on. This we might easily manage, if we would only take the burden appointed for us each day; but we choose to increase our troubles by carrying yesterday's stick over again to-day, and adding to-morrow's burden to our load, before we are required to bear it.

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# CHRISTIAN BIOGRAPHY.

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## LIFE OF DR. COTTON MATHER, OF BOSTON, NORTH AMERICA.

ABRIDGED FROM THE ACCOUNT PUBLISHED BY HIS SON,  
THE REV. SAMUEL MATHER.

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**Religious Tract Society,**

*Instituted 1799;*

SOLD AT THEIR DEPOSITORY, 56, PATERNOSTER ROW;  
ALSO BY J. NISBET, BERNERS STREET, LONDON;  
AND BY OTHER BOOKSELLERS.

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1827.



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**Printed by J. Rider, Little Britain, London.**

# THE LIFE OF DR. COTTON MATHER.

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## CHAP. I.

### *His Birth, Education, and early Religion.*

**ALTHOUGH** it is but of little consequence to a man's personal character and worth to inquire into the remote antiquities of his family, yet when piety and virtue have run through several generations, it gives one a pious pleasure to observe it. It is this, beyond any thing, that truly ennobles a family, and it is the brightest lustre that ancestors can reflect on their posterity. Thus it was an honour to Timothy, that the same unfeigned faith which was in him, had before dwelt in his mother Eunice, and his grandmother Lois. From such a noble family Dr. Cotton Mather descended. The same faith, and piety which dwelt in him, had dwelt in his father, Dr. Increase Mather, and his grand-father, Mr. Richard Mather, both very eminent ministers in New England. And by his mother's side, he was grandson to Mr. John Cotton, a man of exalted piety and uncommon learning, after whom he was named Cotton.

He was born at Boston, in North America, Feb. 12, 1662-3, where he was educated at school till he was twelve years old; by which time he had made such uncommon progress in the Latin and Greek languages, and had entered on the Hebrew, that it was thought proper to remove him to the university. Accordingly he was admitted into Harvard College, where the progress he made in his academical studies was no way short of what he had made at school. Here he soon set himself to draw up systems of the sciences,

as he studied them; which he found to be an excellent means of perfecting himself in them. His systems of logic and physics were so far from contemptible, though composed at an age when few lads are attempting any thing superior to themes at school, that they have been valued, and used for systems, by some others since. Another excellent means of improvement by the books he read, which he used from the beginning of his studies, was to write remarks upon them. Many such remarks were found among his papers after his death.

He took his first degree at sixteen years old; and in his nineteenth year he proceeded Master of Arts. Can one conceive the pleasure with which his own father, who was at that time President of the College, conferred the degree on so promising a son?

Thus, by the blessing of God on his unwearied diligence in his studies, in which he was also favoured with a healthful constitution, as well as a great capacity for learning, he "profited above many his equals in his own nation;" and did indeed follow Seneca's advice, namely:—"To hasten and learn betimes, lest, when old, he should be obliged to it."\*

But the best and brightest part of Dr. Mather's character in younger life, was his *early piety*; for which he was no less remarkable, than for his natural capacity, and his progress in human learning.

He seemed indeed to have been "sanctified from the womb;" for as soon almost as he began to speak, he began to pray, and never left it off again as long as he lived. While he was a school-boy, he laboured to promote the exercise of prayer amongst his school-fellows, not only by exhorting them to it, but by composing some forms of prayer for their use; though for his own part, he needed not, nor did he use the help of any set forms in his private devotions.

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\* Sen. Epist. 77.

His early abhorrence of sin appeared by the reproofs he would give his play-mates for any wicked words or practices.

Like another young Timothy, he "knew the holy scriptures from a child;" usually reading fifteen chapters a day, which he divided into three exercises. And that "his heart was open betimes to attend unto the things that were spoken" in the public preaching of the word, appeared by the notes he commonly wrote of what he remembered when he came home, before he was capable of writing after the minister in public, which he practised afterwards.

When he was grown a little above the age of childhood, he joined himself to a religious society of young men, who met on Lord's-day evenings; and he used afterwards to ascribe much of the skill which, by the blessing of God, he had attained in speaking and praying, to his early exercises in that society.

Some miscarriages which he fell into through the surprise of temptation, when he was very young, brought him under great doubts and fears, which put him upon a very close and diligent examination of his own heart and state. While he was under this exercise, he opened the burden of his soul to his good father, who assured him, "There was no repenting and returning sinner but Christ would accept of. Observe it, (said he) even among men; let a man be ever so vile, so that good men cannot but abhor him, yet if this man becomes a new creature, they will most heartily embrace him, and take him, as it were, into their bosom, notwithstanding his former vileness. This is an emblem of the spirit of the blessed Jesus, and such will be the effect of repentance with him." These seasonable encouraging words ministered very sensible relief to our young penitent, and greatly enlivened his addresses to God, in which he met with strong consolation.

At fourteen years old, he began to keep days of

secret fasting and prayer. When he was fifteen, he was much affected by reading Dr. Hall's *Treatise on Meditation*. Upon which he not only read several other books on the same subject, but drew up a discourse upon it himself; and after he had made several essays of a regular method for daily meditation, he at length fixed upon Dr. Hall's for his own practice; which is, to meditate on some text of Scripture, or some head of divinity; first, in a doctrinal way, as by endeavouring to explain, illustrate, prove it, &c. and then practically to improve it; as in an *examination* of one's own heart by it, in an *expostulation* with one's-self, concerning the sins and duties that may be suggested by it, and in suitable *resolutions*, in a dependance on the strength of the grace of God offered in the new covenant. This happy way of preaching with, and to himself, was no doubt, of great use to Mr. Mather, not only to improve the divine life in his own soul, but to fit him for preaching to others, with that eminent usefulness which he did afterwards.

In his seventeenth year he came to the Lord's table. On this occasion he thought himself obliged to renew the *examination* of himself, in a very particular manner. The result of it appears by what he wrote at that time, which I will here transcribe.

"Setting myself upon the work of self-examination, I find,

"*First*, Concerning my Faith.

"I am convinced of the utter insufficiency of my own righteousness, to procure my acceptance with God, and my eternal salvation. I see that woful hypocrisy, sluggishness, and selfishness, have attended and polluted the very best of all my services.

"I can perceive no other way for my salvation, but only by the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Refuge fails elsewhere, on every hand: But I behold a fulness and a beauty in Jesus Christ; he is worth loving, worth prizing, worth following.

"Such is my desire to obtain an interest in him, and to make him the only portion and support of my soul, that it is one of my greatest griefs to find my heart so dull in going forth after him.

*"Secondly, Concerning my repentance.*

"I abhor sin, because it is abhorred of God, and contrary to him. I am heartily troubled for the sin of my heart, that fountain of corruption. Sin is my heavy burden; death itself would be welcome to me to free me from it.

*"Thirdly, Concerning my love.*

"I long to see and know the favour of God unto me; the sight of that would make all my afflictions light.

"I desire to be as active as may be in promoting the honour of God; and I seldom come into any company, without contriving how I may some way speak or act for God's honour, before I leave it.

"I am sorry that I love God no more.

"The saints who bear the image of God, are those whom I value most. A mean person with grace is more amiable to me than another who has all the richest human accomplishments, but is graceless."

Another thing, in which his early piety was very conspicuous, was his zeal to do good, especially to souls. He set himself, first, to try what good he could do in his father's family, by instructing his brothers and sisters, and by exhorting and admonishing the servants. He afterwards made it a rule with himself never to be in any company where it would be proper for one so young to bear a part in the conversation, without, if possible, attempting to do them some good. And remarkably was that promise fulfilled to him, "To him that has, shall more be given;" for upon his faithful and diligent improvement of his talent this way, his Lord and Master greatly multiplied his opportunities of usefulness, till he came to be very eminently useful to whole churches, towns, and countries.

He would therefore, in his more advanced years, earnestly advise young people to study and contrive to

do good, to love it, and to account it a noble thing; and he would encourage them, from his own experience, to expect, that if they set about it with readiness and humility, and began betimes to do what good they could, God would do great things both for them and by them.

But his love did not express itself "in word and in tongue only, but in deed and in truth." For, from fourteen years of age, he thought it his duty to give to the Lord of all some part of his small substance; and at that age he devoted a *tenth* part of the little he could call his own, to pious and charitable uses. This proportion he afterwards enlarged to more than a *seventh* part of his income.

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## CHAP. II.

### *His Domestic Character, and the Methods he pursued in the Education of his Children.*

BECAUSE I would finish at once what relates to him in his private capacity. I shall now give a brief account of his marriages and children, and his conduct in private life.

In his twenty-fourth year he thought it advisable to marry; and having first looked up to Heaven for direction, and attended to the counsel of his friends, he chose for his yoke-fellow, Miss Abigail Phillips, daughter of the honourable colonel Phillips, of Charles-town; a comely and ingenious woman. She proved an agreeable consort, till he was bereaved of her by death, in the year 1702.

Upon this mournful breach, his family was in great darkness and disorder, which put him upon continually looking up to Him, "from whom descends every good gift," to heal the breach which his Providence had made. His petitions were heard and granted, and he

was directed to a second marriage in the year 1703, with a widow gentlewoman, Mrs. Elizabeth Hubbard, daughter of Dr. John Clark. Her endowments both of body and mind, were such as gave him much cause to rejoice in her, "as one that findeth great spoil, and hath obtained favour of the Lord." They lived together in perfect harmony, for ten years. She died November 8, 1713, with willingness, and without fear, much beloved, and much lamented.

In his fifty-third year, he was married to a third wife, who was the widow of Mr. George, a worthy merchant, and daughter of the learned Mr. Samuel Lee. She also was a lady of many and great accomplishments. With her the doctor was blessed to the end of his life, when she became his disconsolate widow. He had in all fifteen children, nine by his first wife, and six by his second. But six only of the whole number lived to a state of maturity, and only two survived him, a daughter by the first wife, and a son by the second.

Though he met with so many bereavements in his family, as well as sorrows, on other accounts, yet he never "fainted in the day of adversity:" but he still believed it was "in faithfulness that God afflicted him." He considered every calamity as a talent that was capable of being improved to the glory of Christ; as particularly, by his own patient and exemplary behaviour under it; and by his communicating to others those "comforts wherewith he himself was comforted of God." It was with this view, that he preached and printed a sermon, on the occasion of the death of each of his wives, and of every child that he buried. So that those repeated floods of adversity, were so far from drowning and extinguishing his zeal for God, and for the good of souls, that they made him grow more and more fruitful in every good work.

The rules he observed, and the methods he pursued in the education of his children, may probably give



some useful hints to other godly parents; on which account they are worth relating:—

1. He poured out continual prayers to the God of all grace for them, and especially for spiritual blessings; as, that he would be a Father to them, that he would bestow his Son and grace upon them, and “guide them by his counsel, and bring them to glory.” And it was his usual way to pray for each of them distinctly, by name.

2. He began to entertain them betimes with delightful stories, chiefly out of the Scripture history, from which he would always draw some lesson of piety, and endeavour to fix it upon their minds by means of the story. This was one part of the stated entertainment of his table every day.

3. When his children accidentally fell in his way, it was his usual custom to say a few words for instruction. However accidental this might seem, yet it required no little labour and contrivance to be always furnished for it.

4. He endeavoured to engage all his children very early in exercises of piety and devotion; and especially in secret prayer, for which he gave them plain and short directions. And he would often remind them of their duty, saying, “Child, don’t forget every day to go alone, and pray, as I have directed you.”

5. He endeavoured also to form their tender minds into a temper of kindness and beneficence, by putting them on doing kind services for one another, and for other children. He would encourage and commend them, when he saw they delighted in these things; as well as make them see, that a backwardness to such offices of kindness and love was highly displeasing to him. He earnestly cautioned them against all manner of revenging of injuries, and instructed them to return good offices for evil ones, showing them, that they would hereby become like the good God and the blessed Jesus. And thus he

laboured to form his children into a sweetness of temper, as well as into a decent and regular behaviour.

6. He had his children taught to write as soon as possible; and as soon as they could write, he would employ them in writing out short lessons of virtue and piety, which he contrived for them, in order to fix those lessons the deeper in their memories.

7. At the same time that he endeavoured to assure them of his love, and taught them to pay a becoming deference to his judgment, as to all things that were good for them, he laboured also to convince them of the baseness and hatefuliness of all sin, and of the amiableness of virtue and goodness.

8. His usual method of correcting his children for their faults was very tender, and yet not the less effectual. It probably the more so. The first correction, if one may judge so, when the fault was not very great, was to express very great astonishment and disapproval, of so bad a thing, and earnest hopes that the child would never do so any more. For the child to be banished from its father's presence for some time, was ordinarily the heaviest punishment of all; and so his children were taught to account it. He rarely corrected any of them with blows, and never but in case of obstinacy, or for something highly criminal. For he looked upon that slavish way of education, which is so commonly practised in schools and families, by raving at children, and beating them for every fault, to be a dreadful judgment of God upon the world, and a very abominable practice.

9. He endeavoured, with all possible kind insinuations to bring his children to a love of learning, and to make them account it the noblest worldly attainment. Therefore he seldom proposed play for the reward of diligence, lest they should think diversion better than their business: but rather he would have his children account it a privilege to be taught: therefore, his refusing to teach them was the punishment which he sometimes inflicted for a fault. Instead of

threatening to whip them, if they did, or did not do so and so, he would threaten, that they should not be suffered to read, or to write, or to learn such and such a thing. On the other hand, his children were taught to expect, as a reward of their doing well, that their father would teach them something that was curious and entertaining.

10. Above all other instructions which he gave his children, he laboured most earnestly and diligently, to instruct them in religion, and to impress their minds with an early sense of it. He would often call them "to remember their Creator," telling them the eye of the great God was always upon them. He endeavoured to recommend Christ to their love, and his example to their imitation, as a proper expression of their love to the blessed Jesus. He would particularly recommend to them the pattern of Christ's obedience to his Father's will in all things, as that which they should follow, by doing whatever their parents required of them. He would often tell them also of the good angels, who guard them from many evils. He did not choose to say much to his young children about the evil angels, lest it should impress their fancies with frightful notions. Yet he would briefly tell them of the devils who tempt them to sin, and who are glad when they do wickedly, that they may punish them for it. He would tell them further, and that often too, of the judgment and the world to come, of heaven and of hell, as the consequence of their good or bad behaviour here. And, when his children were grown old enough for superior methods of instruction, he would take them alone, one by one, and after many affectionate and solemn charges to fear God, to love Christ, and to hate sin, he would pray with them in his study, and make them the witnesses of his strong cries and earnest wrestlings with God, on their behalf.

11. He not only taught his children the catechism, and explained it to their understanding, by asking

a great many short questions upon every answer, but he used also to examine them upon the sermons they heard, in a catechetical way, turning every head and truth that had been delivered into a question to be answered. This he found was an excellent means of engaging their attention and informing their minds. In these familiar exercises he would often take an opportunity of asking his children such serious questions as these: "Do you desire this grace? Do you consent to this article of the gospel covenant?" And there is reason to hope and believe, that the good Spirit of God brought several of them to an unfeigned consent to the covenant of grace, by means of these exercises.

To this account of his conduct in his family, and towards his own children, it may be proper here to add some miscellaneous hints of his private conduct, with respect both to himself and to others. As,

*First*, He was much in prayer; for he prayed steadily several times a day.

*Secondly*, He was a very great reader, by which he acquired such a large stock of knowledge, of various kinds, as furnished him for entertaining and useful discourse, in all companies. This, with his agreeable manner in conversation, made his company welcome to all who had a relish for learning, politeness, and ingenuity.

*Thirdly*, He laid down several rules for himself in conversation, which he religiously adhered to.

1. Not to affect loquacity and reputation for wit, but to maintain due gravity, and to speak with deliberation; for "in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin."

2. Not to utter any thing that was likely to be wholly useless, and to be constantly on his guard against speaking the least word that was sinful, or that might be hurtful to another; but, on the contrary, to endeavour that others might be made in

some way wiser and better by all they should hear from him.

3. To watch and improve all opportunities to speak for the honour of Christ, and to recommend him to the esteem of men, and to their choice of him, for their Saviour.

4. He resolved he would never speak evil *falsely* of any man; and if ever he spoke evil of any, it should be under the following restrictions and limitations, which he conscientiously observed :

He would consider whether it would not be proper to speak to the person himself, concerning the evil, before he spoke of it to any one else.

He would ordinarily say nothing reflecting on any man, behind his back, which he would not readily say to his face.

He would aggravate no evil of another, which he had occasion to speak of, nor make it worse than it was.

When he was properly called to speak evil of any man, if he knew any good of him, he would speak of that too.

He would be sure to maintain charity towards the persons of all that he had occasion to speak any evil of, and would heartily wish them all good.

*Fourthly*, He was very careful to avoid all occasions of contention, and would deny himself almost any thing in the world, rather than have a personal quarrel with any man; for which he used to give these reasons, namely, that personal quarrels break in upon the peace and comfort of the mind, and almost inevitably lead to sin; that they usually swallow up a great deal of our time, which may be laid out infinitely better, in the service of Christ, and his church; and since we have so little time to live in the world, it is a foolish thing to throw away any of it in squabbles.

*Fifthly*, If he were informed that any person had injured him in word or deed, he would seldom let him know that he was acquainted with it; but would

bury the wrong in silence and oblivion : by which means he has "overcome evil with good ;" and those that had wronged him, have afterwards become his most hearty friends.

*Sixthly*, He was careful to redeem his time, and very watchful against all unnecessary waste of it. And therefore, to prevent the tediousness of visits, he wrote over his study door, in capital letters, **BE SHORT**. And yet, let him be ever so busy when his friends came to visit him, his behaviour to them was never morose and sour, but easy and obliging. He would throw aside his business, and seem perfectly at leisure to entertain them, and enjoy their company.

*Seventhly*, When he travelled, he commonly took some young gentleman along with him, not merely as a companion in the journey, but that he might have an opportunity of improving him in knowledge, and especially of recommending religion to him, which he well knew how to do, in a most sweet and easy manner. He used always to pray in private with his fellow-traveller, wherever they lodged together.

*Eighthly*, There were two books in which he was writing every day ; one he intitled his *Quotidiana*, which was a common-place book, into which he transcribed remarkable passages out of the books he read. And by means of a well contrived index, he could readily turn to any passage he had occasion for afterwards. The other book was his *Diary*, in which he wrote memorandums of the daily occurrences of Providence, and of his own duties and defects, and the frames of his own heart. It is from this book that the greater part of the memoirs of his life is taken. Here, in the records of one year, it appears that he had preached seventy-two public sermons, besides many private ones ; that not a day had passed without some contrivance to do good ; nor in which some of his revenues had not been dealt out to charitable and pious uses ; and in that one year he had composed and published fourteen books. And yet, notwithstanding

his amazing diligence in improving his time, and the many valuable services with which he filled up every year and every day, his humility has filled his diary with continual censures upon himself and his defects; for instance, at the end of one year he writes, "Time so mispent as to render it unfit to be called life." Another year he calls "a year of, a forfeited life." On the review of another year he says, "Another year of my sinning against my precious Redeemer. Alas, my unfruitfulness!" Another year he calls "a year whiled away in sin and sloth." But, after all these humble censures, how happy would it be for the greatest part of the world, if they could give but as good an account of their time and talents as he could! "Blessed is that wise and faithful servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing."

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### CHAP. III.

*His entrance on, and settlement in the Ministry; the Rules which he laid down for the faithful discharge of it; and the unwearied diligence with which he pursued it in public, and from house to house.*

DR. MATHER had, from his cradle, an impediment in his speech, which had so bad an aspect on his usefulness as a preacher, that, for some time, he quite laid aside all thoughts of the ministry, and applied himself to the study of physic. But, by habituating himself to a deliberate way of speaking, he in time got rid of his impediment. And then, by the advice of his friends, he returned to the study of divinity, which he prosecuted with such successful application, that before he was eighteen years old, he was thought to be very competently furnished for public service, and was advised to begin to preach; which accordingly he did August 22, 1680. His having turned his studies from physic to divinity, directed his thoughts

to Luke iv. 18, for the subject of his first sermon, "He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted," in which he displayed the glory of Christ as the great physician of souls.

He preached the first time for his grandfather, the Rev. Richard Mather, at Dorchester. The next Lord's day, for his own father at Boston; and the Lord's day after, for his grandfather Cotton, at Boston. His eminent abilities and pulpit gifts were soon taken notice of, so that in half a year after his first beginning to preach, the North Church at Boston gave him a unanimous invitation to be his father's assistant, and made him a handsome offer for his support. This church having had nearly two years further trial of his ministerial qualifications, unanimously chose and called him to be co-pastor with his father, though he was not yet quite twenty years old. The modest and low opinion he had of himself, kept him from accepting their call for some time, though the people were very pressing upon him to accept it. Upon this occasion he kept many days of private fasting and prayer; in one of them, finding his heart very much inclined to comply with the desire of the church, he solemnly declared to the Lord, that, "not expecting any temporal advantage, but rather sorrow and sickness, obloquy, and many persecutions, he would, out of love to him, undertake the work that he was called to, even to feed a numerous flock of his;" and he then solemnly resolved before God—

1. That he would endeavour to be a faithful pastor unto those over whom he should be placed.

2. That he would endeavour to be humble, under whatever enlargements should be vouchsafed unto him.

3. That if God should bless him to build up his church with an unspotted reputation, he would endeavour to be contented with whatever state should be ordered for him in the world, though ever so poor and afflicted.



Having afterwards signified to the church his willingness to accept of their call, he was ordained their pastor, by fasting and prayer, and imposition of hands, May 13, 1684.

It appears by a section in his diary, written about this time, how apprehensive he was of the danger of being lifted up with pride, and how earnestly he set himself to watch against it. He writes thus: "**The apprehension of cursed pride, the sin of young ministers, working in my heart, filled me with inexpressible bitterness and confusion before the Lord. In my early youth, when some others of my age were playing in the streets, I was preaching to large assemblies, and I was honoured with great respect among the people of God. I feared, and thanks be to God that he made me fear, lest Satan was hereby preparing a snare and a pit for such a novice. I therefore resolved that I would set apart a day, to humble myself before God for the pride of my own heart, and to supplicate his grace to deliver me from that sin, and from the dreadful wrath it would expose me to. I did so: and on this day I examined myself by those marks of pride, which I found in some judicious discourses on that subject; and I saw reason to fear, that I had been guilty of this sin, more especially in these two respects: 1st, By applauding myself in my own thoughts, as when I had either prayed or preached with enlargement, or answered a question readily and suitably: and 2dly, By an ambitious affectation of pre-eminence above what could reasonably belong to my age or worth, and above other persons who were far more deserving than myself. I endeavoured, therefore, to humble my heart with the following considerations:—**

" 1. What is pride, but the very image of Satan on the soul? The more any man has of Christ in him, the more humble will he be, the more low and vile in his own eyes, and the more empty of himself. When God renews his image in us, he pulls down our proud

thoughts. 'Tis true, pride is a natural sin; but grace will subdue it. Alas, then, how little grace have I! How unlike am I to him who could say, 'I am lowly.' Let me for this cause 'abhor myself in dust and ashes.'

"2. Do I not by pride offend God? Pride is a breach of his holy command, and he has often declared his abhorrence of it. His Holy Spirit is grieved by it! and how earnestly does the Scripture caution me against all approaches to it! Shall I bear to think of offending that God, who has been a father to me, and whom I have chosen and vowed to love and serve, as my God and Father; or that Spirit, upon whose influences my soul lives, and by whom I am 'sealed unto the day of redemption.'

"3. Is not my pride most unreasonable folly and madness? For have I any just occasion of 'glorying in myself?' What have I done that is singularly excellent? Am not I, in most attainments, exceeded by most of my calling and standing? And oh, have not I a corrupt nature in me? and hath not the Lord heretofore left me to commit some follies, the remembrance of which should make me go softly all my days? Lord, I am viler than a beast before thee. Or, why should I seek honour? It is not seemly for such a fool. Am I fit for the service I am called to? What am I better than the least of all saints? If, in any outward circumstances and honours I am raised above any of them, I am thereby more exposed to temptation and sin. Lie then, O my soul, in the dust before the Lord.

"4. How dangerous, how destructive an evil is this pride! How does it provoke the God of heaven to take away from me every one of those idols, which in my fond pride I dote upon! And if the Lord should deprive me of my capacities and opportunities, into what a horrible pit of sorrows and miseries should I then fall! And let me remember that pride will, sooner than any thing, drive away the good Spirit of God from the heart of a poor creature: and if that

should be my fate, 'Lord have mercy on me,' what a monument shall I be of thy direful vengeance! O that the Lord would set home these thoughts for my humiliation!

"But what shall I do for the cure of this disease?

"In the *first* and chief place, I would carry my distempered heart unto the Lord Jesus Christ, and put it into the hands of that all-sufficient physician, that he may cure it.

"*Secondly*, I would be daily watchful against my pride. I would continually keep an eye upon my heart, and check the least beginnings and first motions of this corruption.

"*Thirdly*, I would study much the nature, the work, and the aggravations of this evil, and the excellency of the grace that is contrary to it.

"Lord, what shall I do for the cure of this disease, my pride? Blessed be thy name, thou hast showed me a way, and bid me walk in it. Have I not heard thee saying to my soul, stung with sin and swoln with pride, 'Look unto me and be saved!' And so by thy grace I will do: I have done so, and have found, to this day, the benefit of it. Why am I not insensibly and incurably led away captive by this lust, with which I am now warring? It is because I have put my heart into the hands of the faithful Jesus; and he has not suffered me to go on unconcerned about this distemper of my soul; but has awakened me to seek relief at his hands, as I do this day. And now I come to him; he sees how I am labouring and heavy laden, and he has bid me come. He calls for my heart; and though it is a proud heart, I am to bring it to him. O Lord, I bring it, because it is proud. Wherefore doth he call for it? Is it not that he may set up his kingdom in it, fill it with his graces, and manifest the power of his rich goodness in it for ever. Then let him take my heart, and make it humble: it is easy with him to do it. Though I cannot overcome this pride, he can. O let him do it! I wait upon him for

it! I believe and am satisfied he will do it. I have not sought thy face in vain."

Having thus traced Mr. Mather's life to his settlement in the ministry, this may be a proper place to insert certain rules, which it appears he laid down for himself about this time, to walk by, in the exercise of his ministry. As,

*First*, With respect to "his own spirit and temper."

1. That he would exercise himself unto godliness. That advice of the apostle, to a young minister, 1 Tim. iv. 7, lay with great weight upon his spirit. He thought much of it, and read over many discourses that were suited to instruct him in that exercise. And having met with this observation in one of them, namely, "That the want of mortification in a minister is very often the cause of the unsuccessfulness of his ministry," he resolved to read over Dr. Owen's Treatise on the Mortification of Sin, with some other books on the same subject, for his instruction and direction in that duty.

2. That he would "endeavour to suffer injuries and abuses, and bury them in silence, rather than maintain a contest with any man." This he judged would be the best way to promote the grand cause which he had most at heart, even the interest of religion, and the salvation of souls, however his temporal affairs might suffer by it. Accordingly, it has been observed of him, that if he made any difference in his behaviour towards those who had abused him, and those that valued and loved him, it was, that he was more ready to serve his enemies than his friends. His winning carriage has often wonderfully softened the hearts of such as were but ill affected to him, and conquered the prejudices of unreasonable men.

3. That he would "endeavour to maintain a high opinion of the personal worth of the more valuable persons in his flock, and the unspeakable worth of the souls of all of them;" that by this means he might be more quickened to diligence in his studies and labours

for their service, and particularly in his preparations for the pulpit; that his sermons might be worth their hearing, and useful to their edification.

4. That he would "endeavour that the temporal benefit he enjoyed by the salary which his people allowed him, might be well answered, and abundantly exceeded, in the spiritual benefit they should receive from his ministry."

5. That "in studying and preparing his sermons, before he preached them, he would endeavour to make even that an exercise of devotion for his own soul." Accordingly, his way was, at the end of every paragraph, to pause, and endeavour to make his own soul feel some holy impressions of the truths contained in it. This, he thought, would be an excellent means of delivering his sermons with life and spirit, and warming the hearts of the people by them; and so he found it.

*Secondly*, With respect to "his studying and preaching sermons." The rules he proposed to himself, and which he followed, were—

1. "To pray for direction in the choice of his text and subject;" and before he entered on a subject that would require several sermons, or undertook to preach over a larger portion of Scripture, for instance, some whole chapter or epistle, he would address God, with more solemn supplication, for all necessary aids.

2. "To consider the case and circumstances of his hearers as a means of direction to the subject he should preach upon;" and to have some particular design for their edification in every sermon he preached.

3. "To read every text in the original, that he intended to preach on, and to consult the commentators upon it, before he composed his sermon."

4. "Not ordinarily to preach many sermons on one text," as judging a variety of texts would be more grateful to the hearers, as well as a better means of leading them into an acquaintance with the scriptures: nor by any means to confine himself to one method in

handling every text ; but to use that which he should judge most proper for each text and subject.

5. If he were in a course of sermons, on any text or subject, yet, "not to debar himself the liberty of preaching, now and then, a single sermon on another subject," as he saw occasion for it.

6. "To endeavour after a scriptural style in his sermons;" and not ordinarily to dismiss any head, without expressly quoting some suitable text of scripture to prove or to illustrate it.

7. "Not to waste his hearers' time with more words than were necessary, to convey his thoughts without obscurity;" but to crowd every sermon as full with matter as he could.

8. "To have much of Christ in all his sermons," as knowing that the Holy Ghost loves to glorify Christ; and hoping, therefore, that if he followed this rule, the Holy Spirit would favour him with much of his influence, in the exercise of his ministry.

9. "To avoid long periods and sentences," which are inconvenient for the understanding of ordinary hearers, and for the pen of those that write after the minister.

10. In delivering his sermons, "to take heed of beginning too fast, or too loud."

11. "To use notes in preaching;" yet not so to confine his eye to them, as would hinder the life of his delivery and action.

12. Ordinarily, "to conclude his sermon with some scripture sentence," as choosing to leave the word of God for the last thing, upon the minds of the people.

*Thirdly*, Rules which he laid down and observed for the more private discharge of his ministry, and edification of his flock.

1. "To keep a list of all the members of his church, and to go over it, by parcels at a time, in his secret prayers." Supplicating the most suitable blessings he could think of for each person in particular. Not only did he observe this rule in his daily prayers, but he, every now and then, set apart a whole

day for fasting and prayer on his church's account ; and on such days he used to pray for every member of his church *by name*, though they amounted to nearly four hundred. For his own direction in these his private prayers for his flock, he used to take the bills that were put up in the congregation with him into his study ; and there he would go over the several cases, in his secret prayers and thanksgivings, more particularly than he did, or could do, in public. It was his custom also, before his evening prayers, to ask his own heart, Who has showed me any kindness this day ? And he would endeavour to return the kindness, with earnest supplications to the God of heaven, for spiritual and eternal blessings on those who had particularly obliged him.

2. " To observe, from time to time, what evil inclinations and sins abounded most in the place where he dwelt ;" and to keep a day of fasting and prayer, in order to deprecate his own guiltiness in them, and to supplicate an effusion of the Spirit of holiness, to redress and remove them.

3. " To visit the families of his flock, for their edification ;" and for that purpose it was his usual custom to allot *one*, or sometimes *two* afternoons in a week, and to send notice beforehand to the families he intended to visit. When he came, his way was to address every member of the family in particular, about their eternal interest. He usually began with the elder persons. He would solemnly charge the heads of families to maintain family worship ; and if they had hitherto neglected it, he would earnestly endeavour to convince them of their duty, and to persuade them to practice it : and by his exhortations and prayers with them, he has often obtained their promise to set up the worship of God in their houses. He would likewise press upon them the duty of instructing their children and servants in the things of God, and of using their best endeavours to bring them to Christ.

Then he called for the children and servants; and having asked them two or three questions in the catechism, he expounded the answers to them, and made such an application of them, as he judged would be most for their benefit. He made it his business, in these visits, to set before young persons the proposals of the new-covenant; which he would do in so convincing and persuasive a manner, as often melted them into tears, and prevailed with them to give their consent to it. He did not forget on these occasions to recommend to them the duties of secret prayer, reading the scriptures, and obedience to their parents and masters. In these visits he did not overlook the youngest children that could read; but would himself hear them read three or four verses in the Bible, on which he would ground a short and familiar exhortation, suitable to their capacities.

Before he left the family, he would often propose some such questions as these to the younger branches of it, which he would desire they would ask their own hearts when they were alone:—What have I been doing since I came into the world? and, if God should call me out of the world, what would become of me throughout eternity? and—Have I ever yet by faith, carried a perishing soul unto the Lord Jesus, for righteousness and salvation?

At the conclusion of the visit, it was his usual way to recommend to their consideration some text of scripture, with a request that they would think of it when he was gone. And, if any of the family were absent, he would desire some that were present to remember him to them, and request them in his name, to think of such a text of scripture, as he would then mention, and which he judged to be suitable to them.

He ordinarily made four or five of these visits in an afternoon. Though this part of his work was very laborious, yet God was pleased to make it comfortable to himself, as well as profitable to the souls of many.



4. Another rule that he laid down and followed was, "Never to miss the opportunity when any of his flock, or indeed any other persons, fairly came in his way, of dropping some word that was good, for the use of edifying. And as he published a great variety of books of piety, he was continually putting some of them into the hands of such as he hoped they might be useful to. He would say, on such an occasion, "Remember, I am speaking to you all the while. ~~you~~ have this book before you." He has sometimes given away a thousand such books in one year.

On this subject, he remarks, "Charity to the *souls of men*" is undoubtedly the highest, the noblest, and the most important charity. To furnish the poor with Catechisms and Bibles, is to do for them incalculable service. No one knows how much good he may do by dispersing books of piety which may have a tendency to make men wiser and better. It was a noble action of some good men who, a little while ago, were at the charge of printing thirty thousand of the 'Alarm to the Unconverted,' written by Joseph Alleine, to be given away to such as would promise to read it. A man of no great fortune has been known to give away without much trouble nearly a thousand books of piety every year, for many years together. Who can tell but that with the expence of less than a shilling, you may 'convert a sinner from the error of his ways, and save a soul from death.' A worse doom than to be condemned to the mines, rests upon that soul who had rather hoard up his money than employ it in such a charity."

Thus zealous and laborious was this servant of God in his Master's work; and God was pleased to encourage and honour him with answerable success. In the first year of his ministry, he had reason to believe he was made the instrument of converting, at least, *thirty souls*. And how many were afterwards brought home to God by his labours in the pulpit, in families, and from the press, will not be known till "that day

shall declare it, when the Lord shall count, as he writeth up his people, this and that man was born there." Many excellent Christians have declared to him on their death-beds, what great things God had done for their souls by his ministry. He has had the satisfaction to see many dying saints triumphing over the sting and fear of death : taking a most affectionate leave of him, whom God had made the instrument of their salvation ; and exulting in the lively hope of their rejoicing together in everlasting glory.

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#### CHAP. IV.

*His zeal, and endeavours to do good in various ways ; and his manner of redeeming time, for that purpose.*

THOUGH from the account which has been already given of Dr. Mather's labours in the ministry, one might naturally be led to think, that he could have time for nothing else ; yet his heart was so set on doing good, in every possible way, that he redeemed time for several other valuable and useful services. As particularly,—

When he was but about seventeen years old, he undertook the tuition of some young men, some of them older than himself, whom he carried through the several parts of academic learning. He composed, for their use, catechetical systems of several sciences ; and while he thus laboured, for the instruction of others, he also improved himself in various branches of literature. As he studied and laboured to make his pupils learned men, so also, to make them good men ; and, for that end, not only did he watch very carefully over their outward conversation, but it was his custom, at proper times, to send for them one by one into his study, and there to converse with them seriously and closely about their everlasting interests. And he often gave them such books as he judged

would be most conducive to promote the divine life in their souls. This service he continued for upwards of seven years; and God gave him to see the fruit of his labours; for several of these young men proved holy and able ministers. Dr. Mather would often say, he would give all he was worth in the world for those measures of grace and good sense, which he saw in some who were once his pupils.

He was several times consulted by the magistrates concerning affairs of state; and he has more than once stilled the rage of the people, and quelled threatening riots, merely by the force of his persuasions. He set on foot, and promoted several societies for the public good: as particularly a society for suppressing disorders, and for the reformation of manners. And a society of Peace-makers, whose professed business it was to compose differences, and prevent law-suits.

He published a proposal for an Evangelical Treasury, in order to build churches where they were wanted, distribute books of piety, relieve poor ministers, &c., which his own church and some others readily fell in with.

That he might the better extend his usefulness beyond the limits of his own country, he applied himself to the study of the modern languages. He learned the French and the Spanish; and, in his forty-fifth year, he made himself so far master of the Iroquois Indian tongue, that he wrote and published treatises in that language.

In short, it was the great delight of his whole life to do good. His heart was set upon it; he did not therefore content himself with merely embracing opportunities of doing good, that occasionally offered, but he every now and then set apart some time on purpose to devise good; and he seldom came into any company without having this directly in his view.

It was constantly one of his first thoughts in the morning, "What good may I do this day?" And that he might more certainly attend to the various branches of so large and comprehensive a duty, he

resolved this general question, What good shall I do? into several particulars, one of which he took into consideration, while he was dressing himself, every morning; and as soon as he came into his study, he set down some brief hints of his meditations upon it. He had ordinarily a distinct question for each morning in the week.

His question for the *Low-day* morning constantly was, "What shall I do as a pastor of a church, for the good of the flock under my charge?" Upon this he considered what subjects were most suitable and seasonable for him to preach on; what families of his flock were to be visited, and with what particular view; and how he might make his ministry still more acceptable and useful.

His question for *Monday morning* was, "What shall I do for the good of my own family?" Here he considered himself as a husband, a father, and a master. He contrived how he might best promote the spiritual edification of his consort; as what good books he should put into her hands to read, how he should order his prayers for her and with her, when they were praying together by themselves in his study; and what hints might be proper for him to give her, for her edification. He considered what parts of the education of his children were to be chiefly pursued, and by what means; and what admonitions or instructions were proper to be given to his servants, that so he and his whole house might fear the Lord.

His common question for *Tuesday morning* was, "What good shall I do for my relations abroad?" of whom he kept a list by him, as far as to the children of his cousins-german. He considered what he should pray for, in behalf of each of them; and what advices and seasonable admonitions would be proper for him to give any of them, either by word of mouth, or by writing; or what books of piety he should put into their hands.

When his father was very aged, and, on that account, in daily expectation of his removal to a better world, though otherwise in a good state of health, his son laid it down for a rule with himself, that in every visit he made him, which was almost every day, he would turn some part of the conversation upon the heavenly state and world, as a means of their mutual preparation for it.

He had also another question, which he sometimes chose for his *Tuesday morning* meditation, namely, "What good shall I do to my enemies, and how shall I overcome evil with good?" Here he considered what his enemies most needed, that he should supplicate for them at the throne of grace; and by what good offices he might retaliate the evil that any persons had done him: for it was his laudable desire to be able to say, "He did not know of any person in the world who had done him an ill office, but he had done him a good one for it."

His stated question for *Wednesday morning* was, "What shall I do for the churches of the Lord, and the more general interests of religion in the world?" For this end he considered what proposals for the advancement of religion he could make to other ministers; what books might be proper for him to write and publish; and by what means he might help to spread the "savour of the knowledge of Christ," far and wide in the world.

His question for *Thursday morning* was, "What good may I do in the several societies to which I am related?" For he was connected with more than twenty societies of a religious nature, several of which were formed by him, and all of them were, in some measure, under his patronage and care. One of these societies which was mentioned before, was more immediately intended for reformation; and he endeavoured that all the other religious societies might bear some part in the same good work; as appears by the following paper of considerations, which he drew up for their use, and which was read over, in each society, every time they met.

"1. Is there any remarkable disorder in the place, that requires our endeavours for the suppression of it? and in what fair, likely way may we attempt it?"

"2. Is there any particular person whose disorderly behaviour is so scandalous, and so notorious, that we may do well to send unto the said person our charitable admonitions? Or, are there any contending persons whom we should admonish, to quench their contentions?"

"3. Is there any special service to the interests of religion, which we may conveniently desire our ministers to take notice of?"

"4. Is there any thing we may do well to mention to the justices for further promoting good order?"

"5. Is there any sort of officers amongst us to such a degree unmindful of their duty, that we may do well to remind them of it?"

"6. Can any further methods be devised, that ignorance and wickedness may be chased from our people in general, and that household piety in particular may flourish amongst them?"

"7. Does there appear any instance of oppression or fraud in the dealings of any sort of people, that may call for our endeavours to get it rectified?"

"8. Is there any matter to be humbly moved to the legislative power, to be enacted into a law for public benefit?"

"9. Do we know of any person under sore and sad affliction, and is there any thing we may do for the succour of such an afflicted neighbour?"

"10. Has any person any proposal to make for our own further advantage and assistance, that we ourselves may be in a probable and regular capacity to pursue the intentions before us?"

Once a year, these several societies joined in keeping "a day of humiliation and prayer," to implore the blessing of God upon them, and their endeavours to do good; at which Dr. Mather always assisted.

His meditations, while he was dressing on a *Thursday morning*, generally related to these societies: But

sometimes he made this other question the subject of his thoughts, "Is there any person who is able to do the good that 'does not lie within my reach, and to whom I may apply for that purpose?'"

The question for *Friday morning* was constantly this, "What special subjects of affliction, and objects of compassion, may I take under my particular care; and what shall I do for them?" Upon this he turned his thoughts to the poor of his flock, of whom he kept a distinct catalogue, and to any other persons that he knew of, who were either in outward affliction, or spiritual trouble. He would single out one of these afflicted cases, to be particularly considered on this morning, that he might contrive the best means he could for their relief and comfort.

His *Saturday morning's* question related more immediately to himself, and to the concerns of his own soul. It was, "What more have I to do for the interest of God in my own heart and life?" Upon this he would set himself to recollect, what sins he had committed, and what mercies he had received; and to consider what consequent obligations he was under to serve and honour God, to the utmost of his capacity and power. He would consider also, how much it concerned him to be what he exhorted others to be, and to experience that divine life in his own soul, which he recommended to others in his sermons or his writings; and on this account he would sometimes, especially on the Lord's day evening, read some of his own books of devotion, in order to impress his own heart afresh with the sentiments contained in them.

I am well aware the account that has been given of Dr. Mather's abundant labours may appear to some persons almost incredible. They will hardly think it possible for any man to find time to do what he did. But the account which has been just now given of his redeeming even his dressing time, and improving it to the grand purposes of his life, begins to clear up the mystery. He had no loose and leisure hours, by which such a

vast portion of time is wasted by most people; but every moment, in a manner, was watched and improved. Were we thus careful to improve every little portion of time, and to let none run to waste, how much more might be done than most of us do? Dr. Mather was an illustrious example of that good husbandry of time, which the honourable and excellent Mr. Boyle so happily recommends in his occasional reflections. "Betwixt the more stated employments, and more important occurrences of human life, (says he,) there usually happens to be interposed certain intervals of time, which, though they are wont to be neglected; as being singly, or within the compass of one day inconsiderable, yet in a man's whole life, they amount to no contemptible portion of it. Now these uncertain parentheses, if I may so call them, or interludes, that happen to come between the more solemn passages, whether business or recreations, of human life, are lost by most men, for want of valuing them aright, and even by good men, for want of skill to preserve them. But as though grains of sand and ashes be a part but of a despicable smallness, and very easy and liable to be scattered and blown away, yet the skilful artificer, by a vehement fire, brings numbers of these to afford him that noble substance glass; by whose help we may both see ourselves and our blemishes, lively represented as in looking-glasses, and discern celestial objects as with telescopes, and with the sunbeams kindle disposed materials, as with burning-glasses: so when these little fragments or parcels of time, which, if not carefully looked to, would be dissipated and lost, come to be managed by a skilful christian, and to be improved by the celestial fire of devotion, they may be so ordered as to afford us both looking-glasses to dress our souls by, and perspectives to discover heavenly wonders, and incentives to inflame our hearts with charity and zeal: and since goldsmiths and refiners are wont, all the year long, carefully to save the very sweepings of their shops,



because they contain in them some filings, or dust of those richer metals, gold and silver; I see not why a Christian may not be as careful not to lose the fragments and lesser intervals of a thing incomparably more precious than any metal, *time*; especially when the improvement of them may not only redeem so many portions of our life, but turn them to pious uses, and particularly to the ~~great~~ advantage of devotion."

This frugality of time Dr. Mather had learned and practised; which enabled him to do more in the service of God, and his generation, than we are ready to think is possible to be done, because we have never tried.

We have seen how he began every day with devising good, and it has in part appeared from what has been already related, how he filled up the ensuing hours in a close imitation of his glorious pattern, whose whole design and business in life was to do good.

As a further instance of his uncommon diligence, it is proper to mention his writings of various kinds. He published in his life-time, three hundred and eighty-two books. Though many of them are indeed but small volumes, as single sermons, essays, &c., yet there are several among them of a much larger size. As his *Magnalia Christi Americana*, his *Christian Philosopher*, his *Ratio Disciplinæ Fratrum Nov-Anglorum*, his *Directions to a Candidate for the Ministry*, (a book which has brought him as many letters of thanks as would fill a volume,) his *Life of his Father*, his *Psalterium Americanum*, &c. Besides all these, the Doctor left behind him several books in manuscript, one of which, namely, his *Biblia Americana*, or, *Illustrations of the Sacred Scriptures*, was proposed to be printed in three volumes, folio. The true motive that prompted him to write and publish so great a number of books, appears from the motto that he wrote on the outside of the catalogue which he kept of his own works, namely, John xv. 8. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit."

It is no wonder that Dr. Mather's superior abilities

and usefulness, drew on him the envy of some persons, and the malice of others; which occasioned a great many scurrilous letters being sent him; all which he tied up in one bundle, and wrote on the outside, "Libels—Father, forgive them." But whatever ill usage of this sort he met with, was far more than balanced by the honours that were justly paid him, in foreign countries, as well as in his own nation.

In the year 1710, the University of Glasgow, in Scotland, conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. In the year 1714, the Royal Society in London chose him one of their Fellows. He received these honours with a grateful sense of his obligation to those that conferred them: he also considered them as encouragements, which the providence of God designedly ministered to his zeal and diligence in his sacred work; and he begged grace from on high to make a right improvement of them. He set himself seriously to consider what gravity and sanctity of life, and what service and usefulness might reasonably be expected from one, whom the providence of God had thus distinguished above any man in the American colonies.

He was further honoured by an epistolary correspondence with several persons of eminent character for piety and learning; as the Lord Chancellor King, and the reverend and celebrated Dr. Frank, professor of divinity in the University of Halle, in Saxony, with many more, both in England and in other countries. But whatever honours he received from men, he returned the praise of all to God, who is the Author of all that is good and excellent in any man. His reflection on such occasions was, "That man ought to be looked upon as nothing, any farther than what God made him to be; and when we see any thing that looks great and good in any man, it should be with a sensible acknowledgment that all comes from God. Therefore he reckoned it a great unhappiness to him, if he were the object on whom any terminated their honours and praises.

## CHAP. V.

*An Account of the Christian Life, as exemplified in Dr. Mather, with several of his Devotional Exercises.*

## SECT. I.

Of his covenanting with God, resignation to him, and delighting in him.

HAVING chosen the Lord for his God and portion, and given up himself to Him, according to the tenor of the new covenant, he judged it might be a useful means of strengthening upon his own heart, a sense of his engagement to God, to write and subscribe an explicit covenant with him; which he therefore did, in the following words:—

## THE COVENANT.

“I renounce all the vanities, and cursed idols, and evil courses of this world.

“I engage, that I will ever have the great God my best good, my last end, and my only Lord:

“That I will be ever rendering acknowledgments to the Lord Jesus Christ, in all the relations which he bears unto me:

“That I will ever be studying what is my duty in these things; and wherein I find myself to fall short, I will ever make it my grief and my shame; and for pardon, betake myself to the blood of the everlasting covenant.

“Now humbly imploring the grace of the Mediator to be sufficient for me, I do, as a further solemnity, subscribe my name, with both hand and heart, unto this instrument.

“COTTON MATHER.”

This covenant he often read over, solemnly renewing it, as in the presence of the great God; and he found advantage in so doing.

Having thus engaged himself to God, he laboured to improve his acquaintance with him, to bring his heart to delight in him, and his will to an entire submission and resignation to him. For this purpose he formed the following resolutions:—

“1. I will ever mourn over the distempers of my own heart, which incline me to take an undue delight in creatures, in idols, in vanities.

“2. I will bless God for those afflictions, for those dispensations, be they ever so distressing, by which he is curing these disorders in me.

“3. I will always account myself happy in the favour of God, although I should have no earthly thing to give me any satisfaction.

“4. I will reckon any opportunities for being brought into converse with God, as treasures to be preferred above all riches.

“5. I will never be in any other than in a restless disquiet of soul, until I find all my ends to be entirely swallowed up in the glory of God.

“6. I will relish all my enjoyments, even to my very meat and drink, *chiefly*, and if I can *merely*, under the notion of my being by them assisted in the knowledge, or the service of God.

“7. I will endeavour to be continually abounding in the thoughts of God; nor would I be, ordinarily, one quarter of an hour wholly without them.

“8. It shall be my pleasure to wait upon God, in all the ways of his worship, in which I may have communion with him, especially in frequent prayers unto him.

“Lord, assist me, accept me, delight in me.”

Upon reading Mr. Boyle's *Seraphic Love*, in which resignation to the will of God is very happily recommended, he set himself anew, to bring his will into such a submissive and resigned frame. It was on this occasion he wrote the following act of devotion:—

“Most glorious Lord! Thou hast offered thyself unto thy creatures, and often called upon them to take

thee for their God. This, this is that which I am willing, I am desirous, I am resolved this day to do. I take thee, O Lord, to be my God, and I take thy glory for the end unto which I would be, and live ; I take the enjoyment of thee for my great and sole happiness : and, which is the peculiar thing I am now aiming at, I take thy will to be my will. As for my own will, Lord ; I find it blind, foolish, wicked, hurtful, and therefore I renounce, reject, and resign it ; and say again, Lord, let thy will be my will. I have great concernments,—concerns as to this world and as to the future ; they are many and weighty. But, O God, thou art the only wise God ; there is perfect knowledge with thee ; thou art of great power, thy understanding is infinite ; and, in that sweet Reconciler of God and man, the Lord Jesus Christ, thou art wonderfully merciful and gracious unto them that draw nigh unto thee, as I do this day. Unto thy wisdom and goodness I commit my concerns, one and all. I cast all my cares upon my God. O thou most wise and good God, I resign all unto thee : Is it not thy pleasure that I should do so ? It is. And hast thou not pleasure in seeing me do so ? Thou hast. I then profess, in thy presence, all my concerns are put into thy hands, and left unto thy management for ever. And now I am inconceivably happy. The Lord God Almighty will perform all things for me ; and all things now shall be well performed. Whatever now befalls me will be an effect of the great Jehovah's infinite wisdom and goodness ; and though it be ever so really cross to my humour, and seemingly opposed to my welfare, I will take contentment in it ; because I will now look upon it as the will of Him that is infinitely wise and good, the will of him that is my Friend, my Father, my God. The will of him that hath undertaken the conduct of all my affairs for ever. And, O my soul, O my will, remember thou after this never to be disturbed about future events, and always to approve the present dealings of the Lord."

## SECT. II.

*Of his closing with Christ, loving Him, and living to Him.*

ON one day he writes :—" Lord, " I give my name unto thee; if thou wilt have it reproached, I am content, only give me thy Christ, and I shall be satisfied. Yea, I will seek the honour of thy name, whether the honour of my own be advantaged or prejudiced by my doing so.

" Lord, if any of my delights are sinful, or as far as they are sinful, I utterly forego them, and beseech thee to make me abhor them. Jesus Christ my Lord is better to me than any of them, than all of them. If they are lawful, yet will I leave them, when either the command, or the glory of my Lord, calls me another way."

Upon this he adds :—" Now I believe the Lord is mine, and I am his. He will carry on his kingdom in my soul, in spite of all opposition whatsoever. I leave all the weighty affairs of it with him, for ever and ever."

On another day, in his diary, there are the following distinct addresses to Christ, and to his Father :

" O, my dear Lord, thy Father has committed my soul into thy hands ; there is a covenant of redemption, in which I am concerned. I know my election by my vocation ; and my concernment in that covenant, by my being made willing to come under the shadow of thy wings in the covenant of grace. Now in that ancient covenant, the Father said unto the Son, ' Such a soul there is that I will bring into thy fold, and thou shalt undertake for that soul, as a sufficient and an eternal Saviour.' Wherefore I am now in thy hands, O my Lord. Thy Father has put me there, and I have put myself there. O save me, heal me, work for me, and in me, the good pleasure of thy goodness."

A little after follows :—" Lord I have been leaving my soul with my Lord Jesus Christ : and thou hast bid me believe I shall be saved by him Lord, I do

believe that there never came a miserable soul unto Christ in vain, and I believe that I myself shall not find it in vain. He will do great things for me. He has done enough already to leave me without any cause of repenting, that I have, with so much agony of soul, come unto him. But I believe that he hath more still to do for me: having been the author, he will be the finisher of my faith."

On one of his fast-days he has left this memorial of his secret transactions with God: "In the former part of this day I humbled myself before the Lord, with inexpressible agony of soul, for all the filthiness of my heart and life. I did with tears bewail my sinfulness, and I submitted myself unto the sovereignty, and the righteousness of God, which might uncontrollably make me a vessel of dishonour and a dreadful monument of divine displeasure.

"While I was in the midst of my disconsolate reflections, the Spirit of the Lord caused me to behold the obedience, the sacrifice, and the suretiship of my precious Redeemer, as provided by the Father for the relief of my distresses: And that good Spirit caused me to rely upon it, so that I said with tears of joy before the Lord, 'Now I know that all my debts are paid, my God will now make no demand on me, but that I love him and praise him, and glorify my blessed Saviour for ever. I know it! I know it! and now I will do so for ever! I can do no other.'

At another time:—"I experienced an unspeakable satisfaction of soul this day, when, taking part with the Lord against myself, I approved all his laws, and abhorred myself on the score of my contrariety to them, and violation of them; and I justified all the chastisements that had therefore befallen me. And then, with a ravished soul, I felt the Lord assuring me, that his free grace would impute unto me the righteousness of Christ, and at the same time imprint upon me a holy disposition to conform to that righteousness, in my own heart and life."

At another time he writes thus :—"This day my spirit was exceedingly distressed at the view of my own manifold, present, and former vileness, which I bitterly bewailed before God. Yet after all this 'I do believe, Lord, help my unbelief.' I believe that my precious Saviour, our Emmanuel, hath fully obeyed and suffered thy will, as a surety in the room of sinners. I believe that the righteousness of this our surety is offered unto my acceptance, that for the sake of it I may become accepted with God. I believe that whenever thou dost enable me to rely upon this righteousness, thou dost immediately absolve me from all my guiltiness, and pronounce me a 'dear son, a pleasant child, upon whom thou wilt surely have mercy.' And I believe that the greatness of my sins does nothing to render me incapable of this free and rich grace of Heaven, O my God, in this belief I cast myself at the feet of Jesus Christ: There will I lie waiting, looking, assured to receive thy favours."

His diligence in laying hold of all opportunities, and improving all proper means to maintain and cherish the life of faith in his soul, appears in the following extracts from his papers :

"The thoughts of Christ (says he) are become exceedingly frequent with me ; I meditate on his glorious person, as the eternal and the incarnate Son of God ; and I behold the infinite God as coming to me, and meeting with me in this blessed Mediator. I fly to him on multitudes of occasions every day, and am impatient if many minutes have passed without some recourse to him.

"Every now and then, I rebuke myself for having been so long without any thoughts of my lovely Saviour. How can I bear to keep at such a distance from him ! I then look up to him, and say, O my dear Saviour, draw near unto me ! O come to dwell in my soul, and help me to form some thoughts wherein I shall enjoy thee



“Upon this I set myself to think of his glories, his merits, his pattern, his maxims, what he has done, and what he will do for us. I find the subject infinitely inexhaustible. And after I have been thus employed in the day, I fall asleep at night in the midst of some meditation on the glory of my Saviour; so ‘I fall asleep in Jesus,’ and when I awake in the night, I do ‘on my bed seek him whom my soul loveth.’ The desires of my soul still carry me to him who was last in my thoughts when I fell asleep. •

“I find that where Christ comes, a wondrous light, life, and peace comes with him, together with strength to go through service and sufferings. The holiness and happiness to which I am introduced by this way of living, is better to me than all the enjoyments of this world. All the riches of this world appear contemptible things to me, while I have the ‘unsearchable riches of Christ’ thus brought into my possession; and all the glory of the world would not tempt me to forego them.

• “Now, O my dear Jesus, I know I have an inward witness, that ‘thou art the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world.’

“When the ‘cloud of glory,’ which was the *shechinah* that had our Saviour with the angels of his presence dwelling in it, came down and filled the temple of old, what a grateful spectacle was it, and what acclamations of joy and praise were heard from those that saw it! Now a godly man is a temple of God, a living temple, far dearer to him than the most splendid and costly material temple in the world: and our Saviour comes into a heart that is continually instructing, reforming, and solacing itself by thinking of him. ( ) thou heart that pantest after thy Saviour, so kind is he, so very kind, that even at the call of a thought he will come in unto thee. A temple so filled with the glory of the Lord is unseen to the standers-by. The life of the pious man is ‘hid with Christ in God.’

But God sees this temple with pleasure; the Saviour who knows all things is pleased with the sight, his angels make their acclamations upon it.

“In the person of Christ my Saviour, I behold the infinite God assuming the Man Jesus into such an intimate and conscious union with himself, as to constitute a glorious God-Man; or a man who has the fulness of the Godhead dwelling personally in him.

“In this God-Man I behold all possible provision for the happy return of man unto God; and all possible encouragement unto man to seek and look for such a happiness.

“My concern with this wonderful Saviour is therefore, in the first place, to accept the offers which he makes me of being mine, and bringing me to God. I hear him graciously offering to make me righteous and holy, to reconcile me to God, to quicken me to live unto him, and to work in me that which is well-pleasing before him. I feel him so apprehending of me, as to dispose and enable me to give a hearty, joyful, and thankful consent unto these proposals of his grace; and in consenting to them, I have a comfortable persuasion of my kind reception with him; I am well persuaded that he will surely do me good.

“And now what remains but that, as I worship God in the Spirit, so I should also rejoice in Christ Jesus. Wherefore I ask it of God with importunity, that as I have Christ concerned for me, I may also have him possessing of me, that I may have skill, will, and help from Heaven to converse with him continually; that I may be very frequently thinking of him, and feeding, as it were, upon him. I have declared unto the Lord, that if he would but grant me this felicity, I cared not what should befall me.

“My life is full of sacrifices; but that which carries me well through them all, is this consideration, that ‘while I have Christ I have enough, I can rejoice in him, though I had nothing else left me.’

“ By the faithful dispensations of God I am brought to this, that ‘ I feel myself dead unto all creatures.’ I have given the sacrificing stroke to all my worldly enjoyments. My serviceableness to the kingdom of my Saviour was the last thing that, in my death to all things here below, I parted with ; it was the thing that I could least of all part with : but I have submitted to it, that the ever-blessed God should not only make me vile among his people, but also utterly lay me aside from doing any more services for his kingdom in this world. I have been entirely dead to every thing else, and have had nothing but this one thing left me, namely, ‘ That I may have my Jesus not only doing for me, but also dwelling in me, and enabling me perpetually to feed and live upon him.’ This will be enough. I care not if I am stript of every thing else, if I may but enjoy this felicity.

“ While I have been pursuing this felicity, God has led me into various methods of conversing with my Saviour ; and it is impossible to express the satisfaction I have had upon the discovery of some new method for it. No affluence of worldly wealth, no, nor any advances in learning, and improvement in my knowledge of the sciences, could transport me so much.

“ The blessedness of the heavenly world lies in our being with Christ ; and by being with the Lord, and beholding his glory, by believing and affecting thoughts of him, I have enjoyed a sort of heaven upon earth. The light and peace, the joy, strength, and purity with which this fills my mind, is an earnest and foretaste of heaven.

“ I soar up to an inexpressible contemplation of my glorious Saviour, as the ‘ wisdom of God,’ who is the archetype of the whole creation, and in whom there are the original ideas of all things that his hands have fashioned and made. He is the substance, and all the creatures are but shadows of him. From hence I am

wondrously reconciled to my approaching death; for I consider it as my going from creatures here, unto Him in whom I shall find all that I leave, and infinitely more. And I am sure that whatever I now find amiable or comfortable in any creatures, is much more to be found in Him. Therefore when I see any thing that is amiable in any creature, I commonly fly away, as it were, from them to my Christ, my Saviour; and I think 'how great is his goodness and his beauty!' when I find any thing that is comfortable in any creatures, I think 'what benefits will flow to me from him.' When any desirable creature-enjoyments are withheld, or taken from me, I think 'what is it that would recommend these things unto me?' and I presently find my Saviour recommended to me by the same, or much more desirable qualities. In his being mine, I find every loss abundantly repaired.

"As for the delights of this world, such of them as are most helpful to me in seeing and serving God, are those which I would have the greatest value for. But I know of no delights comparable to those which I take in communion with my Saviour.

"As for the riches of this world, I use no labour for them, I have no desire to obtain them, they appear to me as contemptible things; my riches are my opportunities to do good, and those illuminations of my mind which furnish me for it. In my Saviour I have unsearchable riches, and in my fruition of him I have a full supply of all my wants.

"As for the honours of this world, my abhorrence of having the great God robbed on my account, by people's honouring me without their being led through me to Him, renders the praise of men distasteful to me; I do nothing to gain honours for myself, and whatever honours are conferred upon me by men, shall be improved for the interest of God. To be accepted of my Saviour, to have his image imprinted on me, and to be employed in his work, for the advancement of his kingdom, are all the honours that I wish for.

“When I am exercised with any affliction, I repair to my Jesus, I realize to myself not only his hand, but also his love, in sending the trouble. I see my Saviour as once encountering the same trouble, and I am heartily pleased at my conformity to him. I consider what is that good which this trouble deprives me of, and I see the same good, and that which is infinitely better, laid up in my Saviour; and I am satisfied. I find the thoughts of my Saviour for ever sweetening the bitter waters of Marah to me: I find him the Comforter that always relieves my soul, when I have him near unto me.

“How many, O Lord, are my thoughts of Thee! the occasions on which, and the means by which I cherish such thoughts, cannot be reckoned up in order.

“When I see any thing excellent in any man, it leads my thoughts to the superior excellencies of Christ my Saviour; and when I behold the miseries of any of my fellow-creatures, I think on the miseries from which I am delivered by my Saviour; and on my obligations to my kind deliverer. I dare not let my mind be idle, as I walk in the streets: I rebuke myself, and I make my moan to Heaven, if I have gone many steps without one thought of my Saviour; and when I have been at a loss for fresh thoughts of him, I have compelled the very signs and the shops in the street, to suggest new matter for meditation.

“Many persons are inquiring after news, with great eagerness; I am grown very cold to such things; my concern about them, and my pleasure in them, is very much extinguished. Some new thoughts of my Saviour shall be the news after which I will inquire most. Here I have my curiosity gratified a thousand times more, than by the news of the common occurrences in the world.

“I have done expecting any good things from this world; or if such expectations do at any time arise in my mind, I check them with this thought:—

“What is the good, O my soul, of that which thou expectest? All this good thou hast already in thy Saviour.

“On the Lord’s-day, more especially, I would ‘enter into the rest of God;’ for which purpose I attend to my Saviour’s invitation, ‘Come unto me, and I will give you rest.’ And I endeavour to make a particular application of that invitation to my own soul. On this day I get my mind filled with the thoughts of Him, as much as ever I can; and I find such thoughts have a powerful tendency to convey a sweet rest into the soul that entertains them. If I happen to think of any thing that is uneasy to me, I presently seek rest for my soul in Jesus Christ, as being, and as doing, what will be a sufficient relief from that uneasiness. Nay, I sometimes purposely turn my thoughts to those more uncomfortable things that give disturbance to my rest in this world, that I may take an occasion to fly by faith to something in Christ for my relief; in whom there is strong consolation, and with whom there is plenteous redemption. And so I rejoice in the Lord again and again, and so I find his rest is glorious.

“I find in myself daily such imperfections, infirmities, and miscarriages, as cause me to humble and to abhor myself before the Lord; but I endeavour to raise the honours of Christ upon my own humiliations: for whatever I see mean and vile in myself, leads me to think how much the reverse of this is to be seen in Jesus; from loathing of myself, I would proceed to loving of my Saviour; and from a sense of my own unrighteousness, I would affect my heart with that only righteousness which I have to plead, that I may be justified before God.

“In conversing with my Saviour, I go through many portions of Scripture which testify of him, especially in the book of Psalms, taking a verse or more, or sometimes but a part of a verse, at a time, for the subject of my meditation, when every night I

fall asleep in Jesus. The psalms are full of prayers, many of which are so suited to my own condition, that I cannot express it better before the Lord, than in those very words which his Spirit teacheth. Several of those petitions were the prayers of Christ; and when I offer them up for myself, it is a vast encouragement and comfort for me to think, that therein I maintain a sweet fellowship with my Saviour, and that this very prayer was once presented by my Saviour unto his eternal Father: my Saviour once prayed in this way, and found acceptance. I pray but as my Saviour taught me, and as he did before me: certainly such a prayer will be grateful unto God.

“Finally, I am solicitous, that while I contemplate the glorious transactions of my Saviour in his work of redemption, I may feel the power of those things upon my own heart; which is a token of good that he has been concerned for me in all those several transactions. For instance, I see God uniting himself to man in the person of my Saviour; I feel the power of it in my returning to God, and in the union of my heart to him. I see my Saviour leading a hidden life, and passing through obscure circumstances while he sojourned amongst us; I feel the power of it, in my being willing to have my walk with God carried on with all possible privacy, and concealed as much as may be from the view of men. I see my Saviour dying on the cross for my sins; I feel the power of it in the death of my sinful dispositions, in my dying unto creatures, and in the world’s being crucified to me, or my affections being weaned from it.

“I see my Saviour in his resurrection triumphing over the powers of darkness, and entering upon a new life, which he lives for evermore; I feel the power of it, in my rising out of a state of spiritual death and darkness, and walking in newness of life, as being quickened with an everlasting principle of piety, to which I was once a stranger.

## SECT. III.

*His occasional Thoughts and ejaculatory Prayers.*

It might be said of Dr. Mather, with peculiar propriety, that "he was in the fear of the Lord all the day long," for he was almost continually conversing with God in his thoughts; and there was hardly a single occurrence that he met with in his life, but he improved it to awaken in his mind some pious thoughts, and, very commonly into an occasion of short ejaculatory prayers. Not a day passed without various instances of this kind. It will be sufficient to mention a few only by way of specimen. As,

The striking of the clock, very commonly awakened in him a serious concern to spend every hour in such a manner, as that he might give a good account of all at last; and it frequently occasioned a pious ejaculation, that he might be taught "so to number his days, as to apply his heart unto wisdom."

When he received any comfortable blessing from the hand of Providence, it was never without some such ejaculation as, "Lord, thou art good, and doest good; help me to improve this talent for thy glory." Or when he met with any affliction, "Lord, help me to bear, as well as to hear the rod."

When he walked in the streets, he was often secretly blessing those that he saw or met with, and was putting up good wishes to Heaven for them. As when he took notice of a person very busy in his worldly employment, he would lift up his heart to God, and say, "Let not that person so mind the affairs of this world, as to neglect the one thing needful." When he saw children at play, "Lord, let not those children always forget the great work they are sent into the world to do." For young persons he would pray, "Help them, O Lord, to remember and serve their Creator in the days of their youth." For a person advanced in life, "Lord, make him an old disciple."



When he met with any thing that provoked him to anger, he would check the sally of unruly passion with such seasonable reflections as these, "What provocation have I given to the great God! How meek and patient was the blessed Jesus when he met with contradiction from sinners!"

Immediately before he engaged in any more solemn act of worship, he would ask help of God in a secret ejaculation. When joining with others in social prayer, he would keep his heart from wandering, by means of a short ejaculation upon every sentence, as, "Lord, I own it; Lord, I ask it."

When he was about to write a letter, especially to any foreign country, he would think with himself, What honourable mention can I make of my Saviour in this letter? and what service may this opportunity afford me to do to his kingdom?

Thus did this holy man walk as seeing Him that is invisible, and his conversation was in heaven continually.

#### SECT. IV.

##### *Of his private Fasts and Thanksgivings.*

It was his practice from his fourteenth year, almost to his death, to keep a private fast, or a day of more than ordinary devotion, at least once a month; and when he had any affair of considerable importance before him, he would often keep weekly fasts, and sometimes two in one week. He generally recorded the frame of his soul on those days in his diary. A few transcripts of that sort will show how he spent those days of retirement and converse with God, and to what advantage.

Concerning one of them he writes—"Setting apart a day (the day past) for prayer with fasting in my study, I judged myself before the Lord for my various transgressions; and in the distress of my soul, beholding

my misery by my being estranged from God, and exposed to his wrath, but believing that the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Mediator, was willing to have mercy upon me, after all the indignities I had put upon him, if I now looked unto him, I earnestly besought him graciously to take care of all that concerned my salvation, and to rescue me from all the confusion I had brought upon myself by my leaving God, and to be my Priest and Prophet and King for ever. And I professed unto him, that I left my immortal spirit in his blessed hands ; that I would expect every part of my welfare as the fruit of his satisfaction and intercession ; and that I would submit to his glorious dominion, power, and wisdom, so as never willingly to withdraw from the regulations of them ; but I would fly unto his precious blood for pardon whenever I perceived in myself any deviations. And I concluded with a triumphant faith, that he would do me good, and God would have no controversy with me ; and that I should, after a desirable manner, know, love, and honour him ; and that I shall find my never-dying soul under the peculiar care of a merciful Redeemer, in the times of the greatest extremity that shall or can ever come unto me."

On another day, he writes thus :—" This day, having humbled myself, and judged myself before the Lord for many provocations, and 'watered my couch with my tears,' in the apprehension of my exceeding vileness, at length floods of tears gushed from me, in my laying hold of the pardoning mercy of God in Jesus Christ. The Spirit of the Most High brought me to a marvellous temper, which was to me like the very suburbs of heaven ; wherein he assured me that all my sins were forgiven, and that his anger, in the sense of which my soul trembled, should no more burn against me. Upon this I called to mind the names of as many persons as I could learn had reproached and injured me ; and I most heartily begged the God of

heaven in behalf of them, one by one, that they might be blessed with all the blessings of his goodness, and with such blessings, especially as were most suitable for them.

“I also besought the Lord, that I might never sin against him with will, or design, or delight, any more. I professed unto him, that I should rejoice to die this very day, if I might be everlastingly delivered from sinning against him : I declared before him, that I was very sure I should be with Christ ere long, and joyfully behold his face in sinless glory.”

On another such day he writes, that he did, with plenty of tears, lament his wretchedness ; “and herein (says he) I was carried forth to declare unto the Lord, that having dishonoured his glorious name, if there were no other way for the honour of it to be recovered except in my ruin, I laid myself down at his holy feet, to be disposed of for ever by him as he should please. But yet I said, that his name was, ‘a God that abundantly pardons,’ and that he had provided a way for the glory of it ; that whosoever will accept of salvation in and through Christ, should, upon his word, be sure to have it : and so I concluded with assurance, that the Lord Jesus Christ was interceding for me ; and that because he had lived and died, I should not die but live. These motions of my soul were accompanied with very rapturous hallelujahs, with transports of love and praise, telling the Lord, that now I would be his for ever ; and I longed now to be with my Redeemer in the mansions that are above, where I shall certainly be. But for one reason I desired to live a few days more upon earth, even that I might labour and suffer for him, and serve him where I had sinned against him. And this shall be my work all the day long, while I have a day to live.”

Once, on a very pressing occasion, he thought it proper to keep three days of fasting and prayer successively, “beseeching the Lord thrice,” and knock-

ing at the door of heaven, as it were, for three days together; and he allotted to each day its peculiar business, though there were several acts of devotion that were common to all of them. The business that he more especially attended to the first day was, confession and contrition; the special business of the second day was, \*resignation to the will of God: and the chief employment of the third day was, offering up petitions and requests. Concerning this extraordinary and continued act of devotion, he writes thus: "My three days left me in a very desirable frame, very fearful of sinning against God, very much raised in my thoughts of Christ and heaven, and very watchful to do good, and bring forth fruit unto the Lord. But because an admission to extraordinary, intimate communion with Heaven is usually followed with sore buffetings from Satan, either by internal impressions, or external occurrences, I had a trembling expectation of what might follow upon that intercourse with heaven to which I had been newly admitted. The evil that I feared came upon me, but yet I received a marvellous harvest of the three days; the design of them was obtained to admiration.

On another of his days of prayer and fasting, he writes, "It was a day full of astonishing enjoyments, a day filled with resignation, satisfaction, and heavenly astonishment. Heaven has, as it were, been opened unto me this day. Never did I so long to die, and flee away to heaven; I have seen and felt 'unutterable things,' I have 'tasted that the Lord is gracious.' I can by no means relate the communications of heaven to which I have been admitted. I am now sure that the great God is my God, that I stand before him in the righteousness of Christ, that no good shall be withheld from me, that God will use me to glorify him greatly, and that I shall be an object for the everlasting triumphs of infinite grace.

"I was scarcely able to bear the ecstasies of divine

love in which I was enraptured: they exhausted my spirits; they made me faint; they were insupportable; I was forced to withdraw from them, lest the raptures should make me swoon away."

He also kept days of solemn thanksgiving to God for his mercies. His chief employment on such days may be gathered from what he writes on two or three of them. On one of these days he writes, that he set himself—

1. To recollect the merciful dispensations of God to him.
2. To consider the peculiar greatness and freeness of those mercies.
3. To register them in his memorials.
4. To acknowledge them in his devotions.
5. To contrive what returns he should make by way of gratitude to God.

Upon which he writes: "I spent the day in such exercises; and the sweetness of them with the heavenly spirit they brought upon my mind, made me a rich recompense for the labour of them.

"In the close of the day, coming to ponder, 'What shall I now render to the Lord for all his benefits?' he has recorded the result of his thoughts on that head in the following questions or resolutions:—

"1. Shall I not love the Lord, and be constant, fervent, and unwearied in serving him? especially in the rules I have proposed for my conversation.

"2. Shall I not endeavour to shine by a good example?

"3. Shall I not husband and redeem the golden hours which I enjoy, in the midst of so many smiling providences?

"4. Shall I not every day, in every capacity, relation, and company, be contriving—What can I now and here do for God? and lay myself out accordingly. "O that God would help me thus to do."

On another of these thanksgiving days, he writes thus: "The forenoon of this day I spent—

“ 1. In acknowledging my own vileness before God, by which, after an aggravated manner, I have made myself unworthy of all that ‘goodness and mercy that has followed me all my days.’

“ 2. In acknowledging those glories that belong to the great God, as he is infinitely excellent in himself, and as he is the Creator and Governor of the world; and unto Jesus Christ, as he is altogether lovely. In these exercises, my heart was brought into such a frame, as would have turned a dungeon into a paradise.

“ In the afternoon I went over various instances of God’s kindness to myself, in my thoughts and in my praises; but I more especially singled out three things in which I have seen the favour of God, namely, answers to petitions, rescues from temptations, and those afflictions by means of which I have enjoyed both.

“ I then endeavoured to bless the Lord for those favours with which I am at present surrounded on every side: such as my life and health; my accomplishments in any points of learning; my well furnished library; my improvement in the ministry of the Gospel; my peaceable settlement in a place of great opportunities to do good; the success of my private labours; my acceptance with, and interest among the people; the enjoyment of my Father unto this day; and the notable growth and peace of the flock over which I am pastor.

“ Having for some time employed my admiring and adoring thoughts upon the grace from whence these blessings come, I then proceeded to consider the freeness of the grace of God in the gift of Christ unto the world; in the offer of him unto myself in particular; in that sense of the necessity of Christ which God hath given me; in that union with him, to which the Holy Spirit hath brought me; and in all the further operations of the Holy Spirit upon my soul, by which he is continually making me more meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

“ I concluded the day with considering, ‘What shall I render to the Lord?’ I then gave myself, my whole self, all my powers, members, capacities, and interests unto the Lord; which I owned was the least that I owed him. In particular, I added that, since I owed all my good things to the compassions of God, I would always be contriving how to honour him, and to oppose those evils that are offensive to him; and since I owed the procurement of all to the mediation of Christ, I would preach a sermon, the scope of which should be, to magnify the Lord Jesus Christ, and to invite the minds of men to an assiduous contemplation of his glories.”

Besides these many days which Dr. Mather kept for extraordinary private devotion, he followed the practice of the primitive Christians, who, understanding the command, “to watch unto prayer,” in a more literal sense than it is now commonly taken in, had sometimes their *vigils*, as they call them; that is, they spent a good part of the night in prayer; and so did Dr. Mather. He has often risen in the dead of the night, and retired into his study, where he has spent several hours in acts of devotion; and where he has often found that the abridgment of his natural rest, has been abundantly recompensed to him by spiritual enlargements.

## SECT. V.

### *Of his Self-Examination, and Evidences for Heaven.*

Dr. Mather took frequent opportunities of examining and proving the state and frame of his own soul, that he might be ready always to give a reason of the hope that was in him. This was usually a part of his preparatory work for the Lord’s Supper. On one such occasion, he writes thus:—

“ *First*, I find that not only my understanding sees, but my will chooses the great God as my best good, and my last end; for,

"I. My interest in him is my greatest wish and joy, according to Psalm xvi. 5, 6. lxxiii. 25. ; Lam. iii. 25. ; Isa. xxvi. 13. But to this my conscience objects. You would then be more careful and more earnest for securing that interest. To which I answer,

"That I do mourn under, and strive against my own coldness, and endeavour to stir up myself to greater zeal and diligence in this matter. And,

"That my zeal to make use of any enjoyment, is not so lively as to make sure of my interest in God.

"II. I do heartily embrace and purpose the glorifying of God, as the main design upon which I would be, and live, and work. But how do I know that I do so? I answer,

"By my frequent actual dedications of myself to his glory.

"By the disposition of my soul in prayer for any mercy; above all, for that mercy.

"By my exceeding great satisfaction in God's being acknowledged and glorified, especially when he is so by me, or by my means.

"*Secondly*, I reject with much detestation, all that has made any separation betwixt the Lord and my soul. Sin is that 'accursed thing,' (Isa. lix. 2.) therefore I lament it, I abhor it, I labour to avoid it.

"*Thirdly*, I endeavour to come unto Jesus Christ, the ever-glorious Mediator, that I may receive the full enjoyment of God, according to John xiv. 6. I come thirsting after the fountain of life in God. I come to the Lord Jesus Christ as the way; and I would have none but him to be my Saviour. I desire that he should execute every one of his offices, in the accomplishing of my salvation. Blessed be the Lord who hath not left me destitute of his eternal mercies!"

The result of another such trial of his heart and state, he has recorded as follows:

"Asking the help of heaven, I was desirous, if I were yet unsound, to begin the work of conversion



again, and to go over anew all the sorrowful hours that I had formerly experienced in it. But if I were sincere, that I might see my sincerity, and thereby have my hands strengthened in the warfare to which I am called.

“I then found these reasons for my hope that the Lord has begun a never-dying work of grace upon my soul:—

“1. *The supreme design and desire of my soul is, that God may be for ever glorious.* Inferior ends are become despicable in mine eyes; and I apprehend those persons are the worst of fools who ‘live only to themselves.’ The voice of my soul is, ‘O let the Lord be magnified;’ therefore I am contriving every week, every day, and perhaps oftener, ‘what can I do for the name of God?’ Hence it is, that my thirst after any enlargement in the service of God, and the desire and hope of my own salvation, does then affect and transport me the most, when I think—hereby the glory of the infinitely amiable God will be discovered and exalted. And hence it is, that those things by which the glory of God is obscured and eclipsed, especially those cursed lusts of mine, which have robbed the Lord of the glory that I might have brought him, vex and cut my very soul within me. Finally, my heart rejoices in any revenues of glory that are any way brought to the Lord. I feel my own interest gratified by it, while I see my best friend honoured and advanced.

“2. *My heart is insatiably pressing after the highest attainments of religion.* Oh! when I consider what it is to converse with God continually; and not only to be living always *with* and *upon*, and *unto* the Lord, but also to love no creature except *in Him*, and *for Him*, and to have Him for my *all in all*, my heart springs at it; I cry, I strive, ‘Lord, let me thus draw near unto thee.’

“When I have been mightily carried forth in my

public ministrations, I have taken comfort, not for that any gifts of mine have been displayed, but that the power and wisdom, the goodness and truth of the glorious God have, by my means, been manifested to hundreds of persons. This even dissolves my heart, and causes me to love that God who has honoured himself by me. Hence also it is, that my spirit grows more and more dead to, and unconcerned about, keeping or losing any creature-comforts; for I can encourage myself in the Lord my God.

“3. *I keep up a continual converse with the Lord Jesus Christ, the Mediator betwixt God and man, by my addresses to him; soliciting his favour to accomplish the great work of bringing my God and my soul together, and to fulfil the design of all his offices in the performance of it.*

“4. *My respect unto the commandments of God is universal.* Let a precept be ever so difficult to obey, or ever so distasteful to flesh and blood, yet if I see it is God’s command, my soul says, ‘It is good, let me obey it till I die.’

“5. *I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity: (Psalm xviii. 23.)* for let my own iniquity assault me with ever so much violence, I never give up the combat; if I am foiled, I mourn; if I am humbled, I am grieved exceedingly, and I keep crying to Heaven for help; and I am resolved I will do so while I have a day to live. Therefore, ‘bless the Lord, O my soul!’”

At another time he writes—“Lord, I am so satisfied of the infinite glory and greatness of my Lord Jesus Christ, and of thy infinite regard to him, that I wholly give up myself to that illustrious Saviour; and I pitch upon it as my chief happiness to serve him for ever.

“Lord, I am on such ill terms with my sin, that I most heartily give thanks unto thee, for the most bitter and humbling dispensations of thy providence towards me, that have any tendency to mortify it.

“Lord, I will always be at work for thee, and I will be so far from thinking much of any work which I may do for thee, that whatever sufferings shall befall me for the sake of that work, I will not only patiently endure them, but rejoice in them.”

## SECT. VI.

### *Of his Manner of keeping the Lord's Day.*

A good part of the Saturday afternoon was spent by him in private acts of devotion, as preparatory to the duties and services of the day ensuing; such as prayer, reading, meditation, and singing hymns. In the evening he endeavoured to divest his mind of all worldly thoughts and cares, and he called upon his family to prepare for the approaching Sabbath.

On the Lord's day morning, he rose earlier than he usually did on other days. After a meditation, as he was dressing, on his stated question for that morning, namely, ‘What shall I do for the good of the flock that I have under my charge?’—he sang a hymn; then he addressed himself to God in a short prayer, for the pardon of the sins of his past Sabbaths, and for grace to sanctify this day to his honour; then he read a portion of the Old Testament in the Hebrew, another in French, and a portion of the New Testament in Greek; and he usually wrote down the remarks he made upon texts as he went along; then he made his morning prayer in his study. After this he sung and prayed in his family, and gave them all a solemn charge, to ‘remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy.’ After this he retired again into his study, where, in another short prayer, he recommended himself, and the ordinances he was going to attend upon, to the blessing of God.

While he was attending on the public prayers, and preaching and singing of psalms, he carefully watched his thoughts, to keep them from wandering; and he

laboured to get his heart suitably impressed and affected with what he heard, and what he sung: for that purpose he used to intermix a great many private, but short ejaculations, with the public service. After it was over, he set himself to awaken in his own heart such spiritual desires, or to form such holy purposes as were suitable to the subject of the sermon he had been hearing; and he did not forget to send a pious wish to Heaven, that all the hearers might be profited by it.

Upon his return to his study, he read some portion of scripture, or some other discourse concerning the great sabbath, which the church of God is encouraged to look for, and the glorious things which are spoken of the city of God. At his table he entertained the company with some profitable discourse; and indeed, through the whole Lord's day, he set a very particular watch upon his lips, that not one word might drop from him on that day, but what was "good to the use of edifying."

He looked upon charity to the poor as a duty more especially belonging to the Lord's day; therefore it was his custom to have some such entertained that day at his table.

After dinner he returned to his study, where, after he had offered up a prayer for the advancement of religion in the world, and for the hastening the day of God, he looked over his notes of the sermon he was to preach that afternoon; and endeavoured to stir up in his own mind such affections, desires, and holy purposes, as were suitable to every part of it. For this he implored the help of divine grace, as well as for his public work, which was now immediately before him. He usually spent about three hours in his public ministrations on the Lord's day, to a great assembly, and with great assistance from Heaven.

When the public service was over, and when he had taken some necessary refreshment, he retired

again for prayer. Then he called his family together, and catechised the children, and went through the sermons of the day with them in a familiar manner, asking them questions upon each head that had been discoursed on; by which means he both helped them to recollect the things they had heard, and further explained those things to them.\* After this he retired again into his study for some time, which he spent in reading and meditation; and then he returned to his family, when he heard every child that was capable of it read a portion of some book of devotion, from which he took occasion to give them some instructions of his own. After this he sang a hymn with his family, and concluded the service of the day with prayer, particularly imploring pardon for the sins of the day past, with thanksgiving for the mercies of it, and with committing himself, his family, and all his interests, into the hands of his dear Saviour.

On a sacrament-day he has sometimes recorded his private meditations at the Lord's table, of which I will subjoin the following specimen.\*

The first prayer being ended, he had leisure, while the bread was breaking, for the following meditation:—

“Do I need the Lord Jesus Christ? yes, infinitely; but chiefly on two accounts. The guilt of sin on me is mountainous; none but He can remove it. The power of sin in me is marvellous; none but He can subdue it.

“But am I willing to have the Lord Jesus Christ? yes, most heartily; for there is a dreadful necessity that the miseries of my soul should be relieved; He, and none but he, can relieve them. I cannot find any thing unlovely in the Lord Jesus Christ; all his benefits and offices are desirable.—And therefore, Lord, I am willing. Art thou so? then take him, (says the Lord,) I give him to thee.”

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\* This was when he did not officiate as the minister.

After he had received the bread, he proceeded in his private meditations—"The Lord Jesus is mine; if I am ready to question it, I may now see, and feel, and taste it. My Lord and Saviour, I may be sure will engage for my good, and perfect every part of my salvation."

After the second prayer, his meditation went on—"The first covenant is brokeſt, it ſpeaks nothing but confuſion to fallen man: the gracious God therefore enters into a new covenant, which is of grace; in it is tendered all manner of good for believers on Chriſt, the Mediator of that covenant. Am I willing to come under the wings of this covenant? Yes, Lord; thou haſt made me willing. Then, ſays the Lord, here is the New Teſtament in my blood." Then he took the wine and proceeded: "Now I ſhall have repentance and remiſſion of ſins; now all my changes will be well ordered for me; my God will guide me by his counſel, and bring me to glory. All the great and precious promiſes of God are my heritage, and ſhall be the rejoicing of my heart."

Thus did this holy man ſanctify the Lord's day. But holineſs to the Lord was indeed written upon every day in his manner of ſpending it. He was in the fear of God all the day long; and he lived daily by faith on his promiſes; as will appear by another paſſage in his diary, which ſhall be here tranſcribed:—"Let it be a part of my buſineſs every day, to be applying the promiſes. There are certain promiſes that are of continual uſe in the Chriſtian's daily walk; and I wiſh I might every day have ſome delightful reflections on ſeveral of them.

"Every day I ſhall have occaſion for a promiſe of a ſupply of all my daily wants; ſuch as that in Phil. iv. 19, 'God will ſupply all your needs.'

"Every day I ſhall have occaſion for a promiſe of grace, to conduct and manage the day for the glory of God; ſuch as that in Zech. x. 12, 'I will ſtrengthen

them in the Lord, they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord.'

Every day I shall have occasion for a promise of growing victory over sin; such as that in Mic. vii. 19, 'He will subdue our iniquities.'

"Every day I should have a promise of success in my undertaking; such a one there is, Psalm i. 3, 'Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.'

"Every day I should have a promise of protection from dangers; such a one is Psalm xci. 10, 'No evil shall befall thee.'

"Every day I should have a promise of direction and counsel in my difficulties; and such a one there is, Psalm xxxii. 8, 'I will instruct thee, and I will teach thee in the way which thou shouldst go.'

"Every day it were good I should have a promise of not being the worse, at least, for whatever happens to me; such a promise I find Rom. viii. 28, 'All things shall work together for good.'

"Every day I cannot live without a promise of eternal happiness at my dying day; such a promise I have Luke xii. 32, 'It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.'

"O that I may be often, every day, meditating and trusting on such promises as these. It would make a sort of heaven upon earth; and it would have a delightful efficacy towards my perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

In another place are the following resolutions for his walking with God:—"Lord, thou that workest in me to will, help me to resolve,

"*First*, As to my thoughts. That I will endeavour to keep God, and Christ, and heaven, much in my thoughts; and that I will watch and pray against all evil thoughts, especially in the times of devotion.

"*Secondly*, As to my words.

"1. Not to be of many words; and when I speak, to do it with deliberation.

"2. To remember my obligation to use my tongue as the Lord's, and not my own, and therefore to promote profitable discourse, if I can, wherever I come.

"3. Never to answer any question that is weighty, without first lifting up my heart to God in a request that he would help me to give a right answer.

"4. To speak ill of no man, except on a good ground, and for a right end.

"5. Seldom to make a visit without contriving what I may do for God in that visit.

*Th. Fully,* As to my daily course of duties.

"1. To pray at least thrice every day.

"2. To meditate once a day, after a doctrinal and practical manner.

"3. To make a custom of propounding to myself these three questions at night, before I go to sleep, namely, What has been the special mercy of God to me in the day past? What has been my carriage towards God, and in his sight? and, If I should die this night, is my immortal spirit safe?

"4. To keep up a converse with God by frequent ejaculations.

"5. To eye and regard God in his providences.

"And in all, to be continually going to Christ by faith as the only Physician and Redeemer of my soul. Lord, thou workest in me to resolve, help me also to perform."

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## CHAP. VI.

### *Of his last Sickness and Death.*

THOUGH Dr. Mather's life was, in a manner, one continual preparation for death, yet he did not neglect to improve the warnings which God was sometimes giving him, by bodily sickness, to make a more immediate and actual preparation for his great change;



as in particular, to get his heart more thoroughly weaned from the world, to get his will more completely resigned to the will of God, and to get the desires of his soul more strongly fixed on the heavenly state and blessings.

In one of his former seasons of sickness, he writes thus:—"When I was pouring out my soul in prayer to the Lord, I mentioned the further lengthening out of my life, that so I might enjoy and improve more opportunities of glorifying him in this worl'd. And I humbly acknowledge before him two other objections, which my flesh had made against my dying; but which, through his grace, I had now silenced and conquered.

"*First*, My flesh pleaded, that earthly comforts were things too agreeable to be easily forsaken; but my faith is satisfied that the delights of heaven are sweeter than the comforts of earth: and therefore I can freely leave all the entertainments of this evil world, that I may be with Christ, which is far better than them all.

"*Secondly*, My flesh pleaded, what will become of my offspring when I am gone? but my faith is satisfied that God will be a Father to my fatherless children; and that my Lord Jesus Christ, whom I have served without seeking to gain worldly portions for my children, by my ministry, will be their guardian, and will not suffer them to want any good thing. My mind being thus easy on these two accounts, I am ready to die; and yet I besought the Lord that he would please to spare my life, that I might do him a little service in his church upon earth, before I enter on his promised rest."

The peace and comfort of his mind with respect to his children, which he expresses in the foregoing paragraph, was no doubt very much promoted by a solemn act of resignation and trust, which he had formerly made of them into the hands of Christ, at a

time when he was under an apprehension that he should leave them orphans. This act he wrote and signed, and it will not be improper to transcribe the form of it into this place. It is as follows :—

“O my great and good Saviour, thou Son of God, and the Lord ‘in whom the fatherless find mercy,’—the principal satisfaction and comfort with which I receive the children which the Lord hath graciously given me, at their birth into the world, is, the prospect of more subjects for my Saviour, and the propagation and continuation of his kingdom in the world. For this purpose, it is my strong and full desire to do my part, that my children may know their Saviour, and serve him ‘with a perfect heart and willing mind.’ And I earnestly cry unto him to produce a work of grace in their souls, and to take them under the perpetual conduct of the spirit of grace, that they may do so.

“Now I firmly believe that the world is under the government of my Saviour, that he sits at the right hand of God, and that all the affairs of divine providence are under his administration. He does particularly employ the ministry of his mighty angels in governing the children of men; and more particularly does he make them the guardians of his little ones; and most of all, when in his providence he makes them fatherless children—O, orphans well provided for!

Wherefore, O my Saviour, I commit my children into thy fatherly hands. I pray to thee that thy gracious providence may, and I trust in thee that it will, be concerned for them. O let nothing be wanting to them that shall be good for them. Cause them to fear and love thee, and to walk in thy ways; and make use of them to do good in their generation. Be thou their friend, and raise them up such as may be necessary, and in a convenient manner supply all their necessities. Give thy angels a charge of them;

and when their father and mother forsake them, then do thou take them up.

"This is the supplication—this the resignation—this the dependance of C. MATHER."

When he was expecting death in a fit of sickness, some time before the last, he expected it not only without terror, but with full assurance of hope. "Lord, (said he) thou art with me, and dost enable me to sing in the dark valley of the shadow of death. I perceive the signs of death upon me, and am I not affrighted? no; not at all. I will not so dishonour my Saviour, as to be frightened at any thing that can befall me while I am in his blessed hands." To some gentlemen that came to visit him, he said, "I hope I shall not be found a fool, though here I lie and sing, 'Soul take thine ease, thou hast goods laid up for many years,' yea, for endless ages; but they are another sort of goods than those which this vain world puts off its idolaters with."

From the beginning of his last sickness, which was about six weeks before he died, he had the sentence of death in himself, as appears by a note which he sent to one of his physicians, in which he told him, "My last enemy is come, and I would say, my best friend." He was now more than ordinarily earnest to have his will resigned to God; and God gave him the desire of his heart. When one of his church asked him, whether he was desirous to die, he answered, "I dare not say that I am, nor yet that I am not; I would be entirely resigned unto God." When at another time he was mentioning some matters in which he was engaged, and which he would willingly have lived to finish, he checked himself for harbouring any desire of life, and said, "But if the God of my life has ordered otherwise, I desire to have no will of my own." When the physicians hinted to him, that his sickness was like to be unto death, he lifted up his hands and eyes to heaven,

and said, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." And a few hours before he died, he said, "Now I have nothing more to do here, my will is entirely swallowed up in the will of God." His heart was set upon glorifying and praising God, much more than upon his own health or life; therefore when he was told how much many good people prayed for him, he said, "The prayer of the upright is his delight, and I rejoice in that sickness which, by procuring the prayers of sincere Christians, procures a pleasure to the infinite God."

During his last sickness, he often expressed the strong consolation he had in the views of heaven, which carried him above the love of life and the fear of death; and also his full assurance that he should not be lost, but that he was going to eat the bread of life, and drink the waters of life freely, when all tears should be wiped away from his eyes for ever.

Many were the solemn blessings he pronounced on those who came to see him, and the serious charges which he gave them at parting. How earnestly did he wish and pray that the blessing of Him in whom all nations are to be blessed, might rest on the persons and families of his friends.

To a young minister, his nephew, he said, "My dear son, I bless you; I wish you all manner of blessings; may you be strong in the grace with which our Lord Jesus Christ will furnish you. And may you be an instrument of displaying his beauties and glories unto others. Let it be your ambition to bring forth much of that fruit, by which our heavenly Father is glorified. May you be fruitful in good works. You have been intimately acquainted with my poor manner of living; follow whatever you have seen in it that is agreeable to the pattern of a glorious Christ. My dear son, I do with all possible affection recommend you to the blessing of our dear Lord

Jesus Christ; take my hand, with my heart full of blessings."

To his own son he said, "You have been a dear and pleasant child to me, and I wish you as many blessings as you have done me services, which are very many. I wish and pray that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob may be yours, and that his blessing may rest upon you. I wish that as you have a prospect of being serviceable in the world, you may be considerable, and great as the patriarchs were, by introducing a Christ into the world. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen."

The day before he died, he had some passages read to him in his book "Restitutus, or a Discourse upon recovery from Sickness," which passages, he said, he felt, and if he had strength to speak, he would use the very words; therefore I will here transcribe them:—

"If the request be granted, and the felicity of having our Saviour graciously with us be obtained, what a strength will the joy of the Lord give us for our conflict with the last enemy. It is said, Zech. xiv. 7, 'It shall come to pass, at evening time it shall be light.' O the light which a glorious Christ present with us will give us in the evening, when the curtains of a death-bed are drawn about us! The light of a soul passing into the 'inheritance of the saints in light!' The light of an open and abundant entrance into the paradise of God!

"May we have our glorious Christ with us when we are passing through the fire; we shall be as unhurt, and as easy, as the three worthies were in the fiery furnace. By his good Spirit he will now say unto us, 'Fear thou not, for I am with thee, be not dismayed, for I am thy God and Saviour; I will strengthen thee, yea, I will assist thee, yea, I will uphold thee, with the right hand of my righteousness.'

Upon our renouncing all dependance on our own righteousness, and relying on the righteousness of the Son of God, he will uphold us, and give us to see ourselves furnished and covered with a righteousness of more account than the best angel in heaven may pretend to ; he will enable us to say, ' I see the gates of righteousness set open for me ; I will go in and praise the Lord. It is what I have begun to do, and his praise endureth for ever ; never, never shall I give over the doing it.' Verily, the gracious presence of our Saviour with us, will enable us to sing in ' the valley of the shadow of death ;' it will render it no more than a shadow to us ; it will so mollify the visage of death, as that we shall break forth into triumphs upon it, ' O joyful hour, O welcome hour ! Come Lord Jesus, come quickly ! Why is thy chariot so long a coming ?

" In order to this, the power of the Lord being present, he will enable us to read our evidences for heaven, and see the evident tokens of salvation, by which he has marked us for those of whom he has declared, ' They shall be mine in the day when I make up my jewels.' We shall see that the love of God has made us to be ambitious of nothing so much, as that we may be and do what is grateful to him. We shall see that the faith of Christ has not only carried us to him to be made righteous and holy, but has also caused us to take up with him, as our all-sufficient portion. We shall see that we have a spirit of benignity towards our neighbour, and rejoice in all the good that is done unto him. Seeing these ' marks of the Lamb' upon us, we shall conclude, ' O my Saviour, I am thine, and nothing shall pluck me out of thy glorious hands.

" The holy Spirit of God helps the believer, first, in a way of rational argumentation, to take encouragement from ' the things that accompany salvation,' found upon him. And while he is doing so, he breaks

in upon the soul, in a way of more immediate irradiation, and with an overpowering and overwhelming efficacy assures him, 'The glorious God has made thee one of his children, and will surely do thee good.'

"He will enable us to feel the life of God begun in our souls, and a predominant respect unto the great God, governing us and inclining us 'to acknowledge him in all our ways.' We shall raise this conclusion upon it, 'Here is a life begun that can terminate no otherwise than in an endless life with God.' There is a well of water in me that will spring up to everlasting life. Death do thy worst, there is no killing that life which God hath begun to raise me to; have I Christ living, acting, and working in me? and will he ever lose his hold of me? No, no; I am sure of living with him for evermore.'"

Dr. Mather died the 13th of February, 1727-8, which was the next day after he had completed his 65th year. *God was graciously pleased to favour him with an easy dismissal out of life, and with a sweet composure of mind to the very last; blessings which he had often and earnestly prayed for.*—"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

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